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EVERYDAY RELIGION

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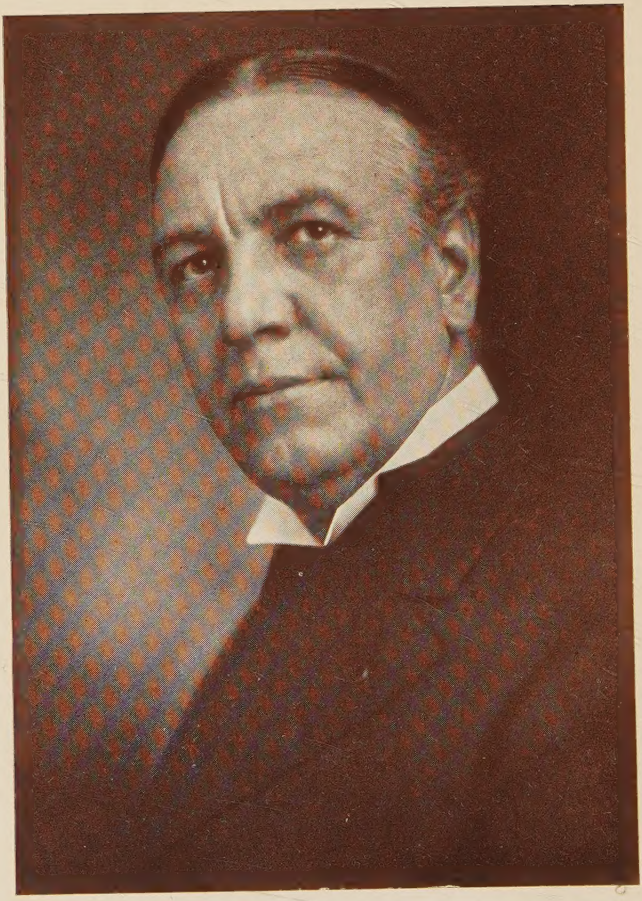

EVERYDAY RELIGION

Little Newspaper Sermons

By
The Right Reverend
JAMES E. FREEMAN, D.D.,
Bishop of Washington, D. C.
Author of "The Man and the Master";
"If Not the Saloon, What?"
and "Themes in Verse"

NEW YORK CHICAGO
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AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO NEW EDITION

SEVERAL years ago, I was asked to contribute editorially to one of our leading American newspapers, the suggestion coming from the Editor-in-Chief. Complying with his request, I began a series of what came to be called, "Little Newspaper Sermons." The one purpose of this series of sermon-editorials, was to bring the great teachings of the Christian Church to bear upon the practical concerns of every-day life. Brevity and simplicity were imperatively demanded.

From these many little sermons, which have now gone on through eight consecutive years, the following have been selected. Many of them were written during the war period, and hence, have a distinct bearing upon the great issues then involved.

The interest in applied religion has never been greater than at the present time. This has been made more evident to me by the generous response given these brief messages.

Washington, D. C. J. E. F.

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EVERYDAY RELIGION

"RELIGION BETWEEN SUNDAYS," is the suggestive title of an interesting book that sets forth the need for a more practical and vital religious habit. It is an earnest appeal for the application of religion, real religion, to life's common concerns. We used to think religion consisted in *saying* something; today we are coming to believe it consists in *being* something. I remember an old country deacon of the David Harum type, whose horse deals were the scandal of the country-side, but whose professions of religion were loud and insistent. His was a religion of saying something. Happily this spurious, counterfeit type which brought disgrace to the church, is passing. Newer and severer tests are being applied today to a man's faith, and while there must reside behind a life of consistent religious habit a clearly defined belief, a creed of some sort, the world is asking for the practical evidences of its worth as disclosed in everyday living. It *does* matter that we believe definitely and unfalteringly, it does matter that we stand for fixity of conviction. Let the man with a creed—an unfailing belief in the Fatherhood of God, show it in daily life by demonstrating his belief in the brotherhood of man. Religion is being and doing. Says a wise man: "Neither religion nor philosophy can get on without an incarnation." In other words, principles must be vital, operative forces—and be it said with all insistence—the vital forces of our religion must speak and act in a language understood of all men. We have known some so-called exemplars of religion whose every-day expressions of their faith no

man could understand. To get down to the root of it all, the religion that is worth while, indeed the only religion that will be accepted by our time as valid and genuine, is the religion that touches market-place, shop and fireside with hopefulness and helpfulness. It is the religion of clean dealing, clean speaking, clean living; the religion of fair play, that despises shams, abhors hypocrisies, loves kindness and plucks the thorn and plants the rose, wherever the rose will grow.

These old lines of an Austrian poet are suggestive:

"The parish priest of Austerlitz
Climb'd up in a high church steeple,
To be nearer God, so that he might hand
His word down to his people.

"And in sermon script he daily wrote
What he thought was sent from heaven;
And he dropped this down on his people's heads
Two times, one day in seven.

"In his age, God said, 'Come down and die;'
And he cried out from the steeple;
'Where art Thou, Lord?' And his Lord replied,—
'Down here among my people.'"

* * *

"S. O. S."

THE signal sent by the mortally wounded Titanic, vibrating through the sensitive ether was caught by another ship miles away, and when the morning came the few survivors tossing about in open boats in the wide Atlantic, saw in the oncoming ship, their hope and their salvation. The story of this awful sea tragedy is lightened by the fine and ready response of the noble ship,

Carpathia. You and I are so sensitively constituted, that is, we are if we are normal and unhardened by life's stern experiences, that the cry of distress issuing from another life has its hearty and ready response in our heart. It is a deadly thing to get so utterly selfish and self-concerned that the wireless apparatus of the heart is deaf and unresponding to the appeal of a fellow traveler on life's pilgrimage.

This world has been so ordered by God through an interlocking of human interests that every man is, in reality, his brother's keeper. No one sails in a steamer today unless it is equipped with "wireless". We sleep more securely on ship-board when we know it is there, and working. It is so with human life. What a dreary thing it is to feel that we are without proper and intimate connection with other lives. The un-wirelessed man is a sad mortal. He lives such a life as Silas Marner did when the fires of his heart burned low. You and I must have sympathy and we must have help, no matter what our cargo may be, rich or poor, big or small.

The poorest man is the man with a broken connection with the world about him; he is like one "without God and without hope in the world". But beyond our own satisfaction of being in touch with others, what a deep, unspeakably joyous satisfaction it is to be able to hear the cry of another fellow-mortal in distress, and hearing it to answer, and answering to bring relief.

God made us with a far more sensitive mechanism than any that Marconi ever designed. The only trouble is, that we all too often hurt or impair the instrument. We can, if we will, be life-bringers, yes, life-savers. The divinest heart that ever beat was the heart of Him Who said: "I am come to seek and to save that which was lost." No distress signal ever failed to reach Him; it is

little wonder that men hold His as the greatest life ever lived. Every one of us can, in some degree, reproduce Him. Keep the heart sensitive and attentive to the call of distress; be a saver of men on life's voyage and earn a bit of heaven down here and the assurance of an ampler heaven hereafter.

* * *

A CHEERFUL GOSPEL

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON once said: "The Bible is, for the most part, a cheerful book; it is our little piping theologies, tracts and sermons that are dull and dowie." For one reason or another, because of its misinterpretation or a misconception of its purpose, the Bible as a book, and the Gospel message itself, are all too frequently regarded as being all that Stevenson says, "dull and dowie." We recall that a United States Senator declared that, in his judgment there was no more popular or entertaining book in the world than the Bible. It is not the book, but the interpreter, who all too frequently renders it uninteresting and unattractive.

Men conceive of Jesus as the "Man of Sorrows," and they fail to recognize the far larger fact that He was as well, the fountain of joy and inspiration. He had much more to say about those things that have to do with life's highest satisfactions, its true joys and privileges, than of those things that have to do with stern discipline. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly;" "I am the light of the world." He spoke of Himself as a "fountain of living waters," as "the bread of life," as the "resurrection and the life," descriptive titles that emphasize His mighty purpose to bring men to a higher standard of efficient living. We

sometimes wonder why it is that parents, in attempting to impress upon their children the values of religion lay so much stress upon its disciplines. Why not talk of its privileges, its opportunities and its joys? Why not maintain that which Jesus maintained, that the religious life is the normal life, the wholesome life, the abundant life? We even overcast the offices of public-meeting religion with shadow. Our very buildings at times are suggestive of death itself. Bishop Potter once said concerning a building of this kind: "It is very beautiful, but you cannot see in it, you cannot hear in it, and you cannot breathe in it." There is too much of the morgue-like about both our religious buildings and their practices. Architects, preachers and musicians for generations seemed to interpret religion as a somber and forbidding thing. The poet talked about "the dim, religious light." It was little wonder that the great Whitfield, preaching under sunny skies, converted thousands, and why? Because he preached a cheerful Gospel. True, there was in it that which spoke of discipline, nor was it an easy, so-called "comfortable" Gospel. It was a Gospel for men and women who demanded strong meat, not milk for babes.

We are not advocating an insipid or milk-and-water kind of Gospel, but we are advocating more of the element of joy, a deep, soul-satisfying quality in the presentation of the things of religion. Jesus lived His life among men; He was not a recluse. As someone says, He was "divinely human." He interpreted to men the God of hope, and, presenting such a God, He filled those who followed Him with "joy and peace in believing."

"We need not bid, for cloistered cell,
Our neighbor and our work farewell;
Room to deny ourselves, a road
That brings us daily nearer God."

AS A MAN THINKETH

THE writer of the Proverbs declared that as a man "thinketh in his heart, so is he," and another ancient writer maintained "as a man is, so is his strength." The old theory that heredity and environment predetermine life's efficiency and success, as well as its mental and moral qualities, has been rejected, and today we are coming to believe more and more that each life in itself contains weaknesses or potentialities that, apart from all other contributing causes, make for failure or success. This is not to deny that "I am a part of all that I have met," but it is to affirm the word of another that, "my mind to me a kingdom is." We used to believe that a man was cursed or blessed by his forebears, or that environment fixed and determined his capabilities. We have come to regard this as a monstrous conception and one that is disproved by the study and observation of human life. The man who begins his career with the notion that the boundaries of his life are inexorably fixed, or that he carries as an inheritance from the past that which impoverishes and weakens, is handicapped and hopelessly embarrassed in running his course.

One of the most fascinating things we may observe is the repeated demonstration of the fact that poor soil frequently produces, with due cultivation, amazingly rich results. To believe that

> "Men may rise on stepping stones
> Of their dead selves to higher things"

is to inspire and encourage the best. Those who mark time to failure and disappointment are in the main those who believe that they were born under an "unlucky star,"

or who refuse to believe the wise man's proverb that as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Supposing Lincoln had been made to believe in his boyhood that the restricting walls of a log cabin, and the even far greater limitations in the matter of education, predetermined the whole course of his life, there would have been no statesman, no liberator, no mighty champion of democracy born. As we study the lives of men we are more and more impressed with the wisdom of the saying that "a man is the architect of his own fortunes." Of course there must be exceptions to this general rule, and there must be those who seem to fall victims of fortuitous circumstances, but we submit that they are exceptions. There is a popular fallacy abroad that says "it does not matter what a man believes so long as his life is right," but as a matter of fact a man's belief, his platform, his convictions, his viewpoint, have a determining effect upon the whole course of his action. The more we can come to recognize and realize that we are in ourselves bundles of potentialities and powers, developed or undeveloped, the more surely will we find our place in the great scheme of things, and fit ourselves to that peculiar purpose or end for which we were born. Someone has wisely said: "Man is not so much a fact as a possibility," and a still more optimistic writer declared, "it doth not yet appear what we shall be." To "hitch one's wagon to a star" one must not be hindered by the accrued liabilities of the past.

* * *

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

IN THE first petition of the Lord's Prayer we have these words: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." This is both a prayer and a statement of Christ's mighty purpose. One might almost say that it comprehends the whole purpose, which is—the setting up of a kingdom of righteousness here on earth. Dr. Lyman Abbott well says: "The church and its ministers for nineteen centuries have been praying: 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth.' They should preach as they have prayed. Too long have we been trying to prepare men on earth for a kingdom in Heaven." We sometimes think that much of our religion might be characterized as "watchful waiting." We put forth our largest efforts for the ultimate redemption of men in a hereafter, and we fail to place the accent where Jesus placed it. His Gospel is a present-world Gospel. The redemption of mankind from those things that are hurtful to body and soul means the ushering in of God's kingdom now. In its highest conception, this kingdom is not—

> "Some far-off, divine event
> Towards which the whole creation moves."

There is no doubt about it, the call to a religious life is based too largely upon future rewards. These rewards are like an insurance policy—they mature only upon the death of the insured. In this conception, the premiums we pay are in the form of certain self-imposed disciplines, devotional exercises, etc. How many accept the religion which Jesus Christ taught and exemplified, as a means of health, happiness and a better present

world? All through His ministry, the Master declared that He came to set up a better world-kingdom, or, to employ the President's language, "to make this a safer world in which to live." What a splendid conception the Kingdom of God presents when we conceive of man as a partner with God in a great world-betterment scheme. Such a conception makes us think of the maxim submitted by someone: "I shall pass through this world but once. Any kind word that I may say or any kind deed that I may do, let me do it now, for I shall not pass this way again."

This petition in the Lord's Prayer really sets forth the high purpose of life. It asserts that we are kingdom-builders. Never has there been a time in the world's history when it needed more this ideal conception of a kingdom of righteousness. If all of us who profess to believe in such a kingdom were to get busy with its promotion, we would have less time for contentions as to forms and methods, and we would give ourselves more unreservedly to the prosecution of those things that really mean a better and more wholesome life here on earth. God evidently designed this world to be the vestibule to a larger and better world. We are all looking forward to the final accomplishment of a future, perfect kingdom. Let us hasten it, by making the world here correspond in some degree to this supreme ideal.

THE SEARCH FOR PERMANENCE

STANDING beside the grave of Dwight L. Moody in East Northfield, Massachusetts, we read these words carved upon a massive granite slab: "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever." Turning to his son, we commented on the significance of the passage, whereupon he said that it represented the governing principle of his father's life. Here was a man whose value to mankind could not be overstated. To almost every part of the world he had gone, proclaiming to men this fundamental rule of life that answers man's great cry for permanence. It is little wonder that thousands round the world rise up and call him blessed.

We stood beside another and more pretentious tomb; it was that of the great marshal of hosts who sleeps the iron sleep in his porphyry sarcophagus beneath the golden dome of Des Invalides—the great Napoleon. About his tomb cluster the torn battle flags that speak of triumph in the field of action. As we gazed upon his tomb we were reminded of the words of Gray's Elegy:

> "All that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave
> Await alike the inevitable hour;
> The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

That he left a name that ranks among the great of the earth, all acknowledge, but the contrast between the permanent value of his work and influence and that which Moody's life suggests was striking indeed. He had sought to make his name permanent by creating a vast material fabric, which began to disintegrate when once his star had set at Waterloo. Moody had builded upon

surer foundations, not upon the capricious will of man but upon the eternal will of God.

The two great theories of life to which these men witnessed are strikingly suggested by two notable poems. The first is that of Omar, the materialist and pessimist. As he viewed life, he saw it thus:

> "One thing is certain and the rest is lies;
> The flower that once is blown forever dies."

or again,

> "I sent my Soul through the invisible,
> Some letter of that after-life to spell;
> And by-and-by my Soul returned to me,
> And answered, I myself, am heaven and hell."

There is little of comfort or assurance in such a conception.

Over against it we set the mighty words of Tennyson, wrought out of a sorrow that almost consumed his soul. After wrestling for seventeen years with the problem of life and death, he wrote these lines:

> "Strong Son of God, Immortal love,
> Whom we that have not seen thy face,
> By faith, and faith alone embrace,
> Believing where we cannot prove."

But still more triumphant are the words of his Swan Song:

> "For though from out our bourne of time and place
> The flood may bear me far,
> I hope to see my pilot, face to face,
> When I have crossed the bar."

If the above text speaks of a law of immortality, it were well for us to heed its mighty lesson.

The one condition precedent to permanence, is the fulfillment of the will of God.

"Our wills are ours, we know not why
Our wills are ours to make them Thine."

* * *

ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT

IT IS recorded in the history of the Children of Israel, that when they moved from the land of bondage and were on their way to the land of promise, they came ultimately to Mount Seir, and there for some unknown reason they camped indefinitely. What caused indecision in the movement is not related, but it is stated: "We compassed Mount Seir many days," until ultimately the command came: "Ye have compassed this mountain long enough. Turn northward." Whereupon the great camp struck its tents and moved on its journey toward the land of promise.

It is an illustration of how a people. as well as an individual, experiences what the physicians call, "arrested development." Something happens in the life of a body and immediately it ceases to grow and expand, and we are told that when a body ceases to grow it begins to die. We constantly observe this in the life of peoples and individuals. In his splendid book, "Mr. Britling Sees it Through," Mr. Wells describes the situation in England before the war in the following way: "Nothing changes in England because the people who want to change things, change their minds before they change anything else," and again, "Unless something

tumbles down here we never think of altering it, and even then we just shore it up."

It was a case of arrested development, and what is true of England is undoubtedly true of much of our own American life. We come to the rut-periods where we get just about so far and then begin to move in circles, and the unfortunate thing is that we think movement necessarily signifies progress. In our great Civil War there was a long period in which there was a good deal of movement, but no progress, until at length an unattractive man without any gold braid on his uniform emerged from the Middle West, and Lincoln found in him the master of the situation. In passing, it is interesting to note that it is not always men who wear the most gold braid who do the most work, either in public or private life.

One of the causes of arrested development, in either corporate or individual life, is conceit, arrogance, or self-pride. We adopt the dangerous policy, "let well enough alone," and where communities or individuals adopt this policy they are doomed to disappointment and defeat, and ultimately to annihilation. Let the business man think he has reached the climax of his efficiency, and let him begin to move in circles, and we know what follows. We have compassed our Mount Seir long enough, and the challenge is irresistible to us as a people and as individuals to "move forward."

This has a striking application to our moral or religious habit of life. Somehow or other in this particular we seem more prone to suffer arrested development than in anything else. Perhaps we think ourselves good enough or as good as other people. In our religious life, cultivation and discipline are imperatively demanded. There is no easy road to goodness or perfection of any kind,

and we are in a bad way when we feel satisfied with ourselves. Dissatisfaction marks, as a rule, the beginning of a change of some sort, and one of the convictions we hold is, that it is about time we had some very definite change so far as our moral and religious life is concerned. We are drifting too much. We are too much affected by fads and fancies. As a matter of fact, we are too utterly self-satisfied with what we are. This whole matter of arrested development touches every phase of our individual and corporate life. Is there not a great call to the world at large today to "move forward?"

* * *

A SOLDIER'S BIBLE

THE writer of the Psalms, evidently passing through a crisis, declared: "In the time of my trouble I sought the Lord." It is an amazing fact that adversity seems to be one of the means by which men are compelled to look for strength and comfort to the divine Father. Few, if any are saved through prosperity; thousands have recovered or been brought to a realization of their need through adversity. Prosperity has a tendency to enervate and to destroy the moral fibre. Adversity discloses our strength and encourages higher thinking and nobler living. The revealing power of misfortune is evident in almost every life. Nations and peoples that have had long periods of prosperity have become sterile and stagnant, so far as their religious impulses were concerned. Prosperity tends to insularity, selfishness and arrogance. No one seeks adversity in any form,

and yet every page of history declares, that nations and individuals have been reborn through the hardships and disciplines of misfortune and adversity.

One of the best examples of this that we have come across for some time, is disclosed in a soldier's Bible that was found on the field of Flanders, owned by one Raymond Lodge, the son of the distinguished Sir Oliver Lodge. When the Bible was returned to his mother, she found its pages glued together with the blood of her son. One day in opening the book, she disclosed on its fly-leaf a number of passages that Raymond had evidently selected for his inspiration and guidance, while living the exposed life in the trenches. Mrs. Lodge says: "The religious side of Raymond was hardly known to the family." And yet, whether known or unknown, this young man of twenty-six, carefully trained and nurtured, and highly educated, in the hour of his need turned for comfort and direction to the Book of books. We have rarely known finer discrimination in the selection of passages than this youth disclosed. Among them were these: "The Eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint." The whole incident is in demonstration of the point, that a crisis in life constitutes its rare opportunity, or to use the language of another: "Our importunity is God's opportunity."

Shall not we of America believe that out of the present world-crisis there is coming a newer and finer manhood, a nobler quality of faith in God, and a clearer recognition of our obligations to one another. Evidently Lieutenant Lodge realized on the battle-field more clearly than ever, the mighty significance of the two great commandments given by Jesus: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with

all thy heart," and, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Perhaps the Bible carried in the soldier's equipment on the field of action is to take on a new meaning, and we are to realize more than we have ever realized before, not only our relation and obligation to God, but our relation and obligation to our fellows. Just now in the time of our trouble, in the time of the world's trouble, let us set our faces God-ward, and realize that in spite of all human weakness and failure, yes, and wickedness too, God's purposes are working themselves out, and that man reaches the highest approximation of efficiency when he is consciously and consecratedly promoting God's self-evident plans. It was with this sublime hope of God's provident care that Whittier wrote:

"I know not what the future hath
Of marvel or surprise,
Assured alone that life and death
His mercy underlies.

I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air,
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care."

* * *

A MAN'S PRIVILEGE

ONE of the finest passages with which we are familiar that sets forth man's privilege as a world-citizen, is this one: "A man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Emerson once asked the question:

"What makes a nation great?" and answered it by saying: "The kind of men it turns out."

The above passage is part of the record that tells of a nation's recovery. It is also an appeal for the recognition of the supreme place of character. As a matter of fact, it was written for a people that was anxious concerning its security. The national permanence seemed to be imperiled, and there was a wide-spread feeling of deep distrust and unrest. How to maintain the nation's stability was the large question of the hour. The prophet declares that he is the best citizen who constitutes a source of retreat, protection and inspiration to his fellows.

It is a remarkable fact that not many men, but few, constitute in each period of human history the sources of guidance and direction to their fellows. They stand out conspicuously above the average and mediocre, and in a striking way illustrate the significant language of our text. Such were Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson to the South, and Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant to the North in our Civil War. Such have been the men who have shaped and fashioned the ideals and destinies of an age, and by sheer force of character compelled men to recognize them. Obviously, we cannot all be heroic figures; most of us are of the average sort, and yet, every last one of us can, in some measure approximate the ideal. The Prophet's word suggests how to live unselfishly and helpfully for the world about us. A humble ambulance driver on the battle front may not be as conspicuous as the general who commands a division or the captain who directs a company, but the place he fills is indispensable and supremely important, and we are bound to believe that, to the sufferers whom he carries back to the waiting physicians and nurses, he is as

a hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

Just now, one of the popular phrases is: "Every man must do his bit." In other words, we are all challenged by the magnitude of present events to do something other than our common task or to work only for our personal, selfish interests. The world is clamoring for the exemplification of the practical values of religion, and is saying to every one of us: "Show me thy faith by thy works." What a magnificent opportunity is presented today to live this ideal life! How immense are the privileges of this pregnant hour! Must we not believe that God is conscripting men for service now as never before, and that selfishness and self-ease, indolence and self-seeking, are to give way to all those finer qualities that make for the higher satisfactions and joys and peace of life? There are few, if any, truer words than these: "He that loseth his life, shall find it."

* * *

ON BEING COURTEOUS

THE lubricant that makes the wheels of the social and commercial machinery move without friction, is courtesy, the recognition of what we sometimes call, "the little amenities of life." We often hear the expression: "It costs nothing to be courteous," and it is true. Yet, how infrequently do we meet a person who is altogether courteous in all the contacts of life.

Recently we read of a so-called "Steel King," of whom it was said that he won his way to fame and prosperity through courtesy and kindliness. There are some people who can say "no" to us and do it in such a way as to

make us happy. There are others who say "yes" and seem to agree with us, and yet they ruffle up our spirits and hurt our pride.

Courtesy is the expression of our finer self, the recognition by us of the interests of others, the delicate appreciation on our part of human feelings, and the discriminating acknowledgment of varying temperaments. To be courteous means to express in a splendid way our Christian conviction, for one of the commands of our religion is "be courteous" and, again, "be ye kind, one to another." We have always liked that word: "He would not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax." To be courteous means to be thoughtful at all times of the feelings of others. We can hardly think of a courteous man being abrupt or ready to censure without due reflection. A courteous person is deferential in a proper sense, is not intrusive, is not self-conceited or arrogant. It would be well if in our schools we had a department given over to the recognition and cultivation of this important quality, for, after all, it is a thing to be developed. Few of us are courteous by instinct. Only now and again we meet a man who is essentially chivalrous, or a woman who is essentially gracious and thoughtful about small matters.

There lived in this city for many years as one of its foremost millers, a man who was distinguished for this ennobling quality. The very atmosphere of his offices was surcharged with it, every officer and clerk came under its refreshing spell. Men called him a "courtly man." Why? Because his life expressed through its every word and act the thoughtful, chivalrous courtesy of a Christian gentleman. Part, and no small part, of his conspicuous success was due to his unfailing courtesy.

Courtesy extends to everything in life, even to the matter of letter writing. To fail to answer a note is an act of discourtesy, and even the phrasing of a note discloses, as possibly nothing else does, this quality in one's nature. To be courteous in a public conveyance means to recognize the priority of woman's claim to comfort and if more of us were courteous there would be fewer delicate women strap-hanging. Our youth are admonished that they must "hustle," but no "hustler" has time for acts of courtesy. He is too engrossed in "getting there." In no place does courtesy have a larger value than in the recognition of and reverence for old age. We sometimes think there would be more Christians in the world if what we are pleading for were more widely recognized.

* * *

THE CALL FOR SIMPLICITY

"LET him do it with simplicity." While life has become more complex and interrelated and while on every hand we are witnessing changes that indicate that the world generally is demanding more conveniences and better facilities as well as added luxuries, yet at the same time we believe that underlying all our so-called modern demands, there is a persistent cry for more simplicity. This discloses itself in many ways. We have a revival of the old fashioned furnishings of the Colonial days. Indeed, our architecture is in large part an attempt to reproduce in exterior and interior the New England home. The writers who affect us most deeply are the writers who tell of the homely, simple things of life. This is why Charles Dickens continues to be in many respects the most popular of novelists. Balzac, the great French

writer, successfully attempted to interpret "The Human Comedy," and holds his unchallenged place in the French school. The poets who touch us most deeply are not those who obscure their meaning in fine phrases, but those who express the simple yearnings of the human heart, as does Robert Burns and our own splendid Whittier. Henry Ward Beecher, judged by class-room standards, might have been regarded as lacking form and style in his preaching. He was simple, homely, and illustrated his discourses from the common things of life, with the result that he was the greatest preacher of his age.

We sometimes think our musicians make a mistake in trying to over-cultivate us. We believe in the classics and we study them, but we should hate to be fed on them forever. It is an interesting thing to observe that a sweet Irish singer of international fame, with his old fashioned melodies can attract nightly, audiences that equal those of the grand opera, and why? Because he appeals to the finer emotions; in other words he touches the heart and he does it in a song language that the people understand. Whether our wiseacres in literature, music or art will do so or not, the people are willing to go just about so far, and then they demand, for relaxation, the homely and the simple things. We cannot be fed on pate de foie gras and other delicacies all the time. It destroys our palates.

What is true of these other things is pre-eminently true of the things of religion. We have read some sermons of so-called great theologians that paralyzed every emotion of our being. True, they were learned and pre-eminently scholarly, but they made no appeal to the heart. They were born in the atmosphere of a refrigerator. We know other men who have no distinction

as great preachers, yes, and we know some laymen of the same kind, and their simple utterances, unadorned with the flowers of rhetoric and in some respects uninformed, so far as theology is concerned, go straight to and reach the heart.

Why cannot we be more simple, less affected, less superficial? Why cannot we bring up our children to realize that the best things in the world and the only things really worth having are the simple, homely things? Even beauty itself appeals to us more strongly where it is unaffected and unconscious beauty. Let us try to get back some of the old graces and simplicities of life, and even if we must live in an age of infinite change and variety, let us not lose out of our lives those elements that make for real happiness.

* * *

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

"WHO is my neighbor?" This is taken from one of the most strikingly suggestive stories that Jesus ever told. The incidents are familiar. A man goes down from Jerusalem to Jericho and falls among thieves. He is left by the roadside for dead. Presently a priest passes by and witnesses the man's condition, gives him no help and continues on his way. He is followed by another officer of the church, a Levite, who is a bit more considerate. He goes and looks at the man, recognizes the seriousness of his situation, but gives him no aid and passes by on the other side. Then follows a Samaritan, one of a despised and rejected group, a social outcast, a pariah, whose relations with the Jews are remote and indifferent. He goes to the man, cares for him,

binds up his wounds, takes him to an inn, pays his charges and insures his recovery. "Which of these," said Christ, "was neighbor unto him that fell among thieves?" The answer is obvious and immediate. "He that showed mercy on him." "Go and do thou likewise," said Jesus to the lawyer.

This is the best story on neighborliness that we know of in all the literature of the world. What an enlarged and splendid conception it gives us of our responsibility! How it widens our horizons and gives us new visions of our obligations! We used to think of neighborhood and neighbor as terms that defined certain restricted areas and certain closely related peoples—those whose lives in some wise impinged upon our own; these were our neighbors. All this is being changed today. Titanic forces are bringing us into closer fellowship and relationship with races and peoples remote. As some one says: "The world has become a vast whispering gallery," and a word spoken in far-away Tokio is heard in New York in an incredibly brief space of time. The doings on the battlefields of Europe of yesterday are chronicled in this morning's papers. From China or from the heart of Africa the fleet-footed messengers carry the news, and even the ether itself, through the wireless telegraph system, has become as a new link to bind peoples together. We live in a neighborhood that comprehends the world, and the men or women who are simply satisfied with their little limited spheres or who exercise their responsibilities within a restricted area, are hardly worthy of citizenship in the great neighborhood of nations. Boasting of our American citizenship, (as well we may) let us remember that within the past few years we have overleaped seas and now we are clasping hands as brothers, with our neighbors in France and Belgium, in Italy

and England. What a new conception of the terms, "Neighbor" and "Neighborhood" we have today!

It has taken the world nineteen centuries to catch, even partially, the mighty meaning of this old story. It has been a selfish, cold, unneighborly sort of a world, with a leaning to the maxim: "every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost."

There has been precious little altruism in business until recent times and much of selfish insularity about our social life and practices. We believe this is rapidly changing and there are clear and unmistakable signs that we are moving forward to the day when,

> "Man to man, the world o'er
> Shall brithers be for a' that."

This spirit must come more conspicuously into our own national life. Here we are, a vast polyglot nation, made up of many old world peoples. Hitherto we have betrayed signs that we were altogether too heterogeneous and unassimilated, perhaps dangerously so. We have needed some unifying and commanding purpose to fuse us together; we have grown smug and selfish and dangerously independent; now all this must be changed, if we are to endure. The man who says: "Am I my brother's keeper?" and who rejects his responsibility to his fellows, must be branded and banned as a traitor. Everywhere and in everything we must understand and cultivate our social responsibility. Let us have done with all caddishness and cheap, snobbish pride, and let us bend every energy to make America more truly the "land of the free and the home of the brave."

After all, the old Latin poet had a fine and Christian conception of life when he wrote: "I am a man, and nothing that is human is foreign to me." The world

must be made a safe neighborhood in which to live, and a neighborhood implies neighborly fellowship, and neighborly fellowship implies social responsibility.

* * *

THE FAITH OF A SOLDIER

"HOLD Thou me up and I shall be safe." That the faith of a soldier should be different from that of other men is hardly to be expected, and yet the very exigencies and extremes of life with which the soldier deals, call for and demand something more heroic in the way of faith than is recognized or practiced by the average layman. In days of peace when the humdrum of life is commonplace, unfortunately religious faith and conviction seem to become matters of indifference, colorless and altogether lacking in any of the heroic elements. There is something thrilling about the faith of the Crusaders. While it may have expressed itself at times in a zeal that lacked both moderation and intelligence, it was, nevertheless, something that won the admiration and praise of men generally. We are not made strong by pursuing the line of least resistance, and if the muscles of the body become weak and flabby from lack of exercise, may we not believe that the muscles of the soul or of the spiritual man lose their vigor and vitality when lightly exercised or used?

Recently we received a letter that describes the average life of an average Christian young man before and since he entered the service. We quote from it:

"He had been made to attend Church all his life. He could not have quite understood it, but now that he does his own thinking he has swung to the other extreme. He

doubts everything—God, Christ, the verity of the Bible —and feels that religion and the forms of the Church are emotional, yet, to cap it all he wants to believe, but not blindly."

This seems to be of a piece with Donald Hankey's description in his "Student in Arms" of the soldier in the trenches. He speaks of the "inarticulate faith" of the men. He maintains that to many of them the mere forms of religion make little or no appeal, and yet, in the heart of almost every one of them, resides a deep, fundamental religious conviction. He raises the question whether the Church at large has not misunderstood the youth of our generation, and whether it has not sought to interpret religion to them in a language which they fail to understand. The question is a very pertinent one, and must be considered by every thoughtful religious worker. Our observation leads us to think that the strenuous service of camp life, with all its multiform temptations, conduces to more serious reflection and a more urgent demand for the sustaining power and comfort of religion. It is no uncommon thing for a young man or woman to come to a period in life where they have doubts, and indeed very frequently this very period of doubt and misgiving leads to a larger, stronger and finer faith. Even the great Master Himself had His wilderness experience, and out of it, divine though He was, he came to his mighty tasks refreshed and stimulated, and ready to go to Calvary.

It may be possible that the present testing of the world's faith, through the hardships and sacrifices of its Calvary, is to result in a newer, more understandable and more virile expression of religion in the life of the people. We are perfectly clear that a faith that expresses itself only in perfunctory services, is unsustaining and

impracticable. On the other hand, we are very clear that a crisis, such as the present one, calls for a positive and definite expression of religion, an expression that is not blind but strong and definite in its trust in the upholding, sustaining and saving power of Almighty God. Perhaps it may not take on the most refined expression, but it must be positive and it must demonstrate itself through conduct. It was a soldier in Flanders who, after passing through a long period of doubt, just before he fell in action, learned to lean upon the word, "Hold Thou me up and I shall be safe." Though he fell facing the enemy, he was conscious with his latest breath that the great enigma of life had been solved and that death was but the opening of the gateway into life, full and abundant. It is such a faith that is universally demanded today to sustain the hearts and minds of mankind.

* * *

KEEPING CLEAN

WHAT a splendid habit of thinking and practice is found in that passage: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report,—think on these things."

The habit of keeping clean does not begin and end with the bath. There are many of us who try to be clean outwardly, and measurably succeed, but we have known people of immaculate exteriors who lacked inner cleanliness and purity of life. It is a singular thing, but quite universal, (and a close observer of men comes to recognize it,) that the habit of one's thinking comes in

due time to disclose itself in one's face. Whether the face is the index of character or not may be a debatable question. We do know that Leonardo da Vinci was able to cover up the viciousness of his private life by exhibiting to the world some of the finest art it has ever known, and we also know that there have been many producers of beautiful things in art and music whose inner lives have been far from clean and wholesome. How often the art of such a painter as Leonardo, loses something of its power and persuasiveness because we remember the unwholesomeness of his habit of life.

The germ of mental uncleanness or heart impurity may be found in some incident or story related, perhaps without design, by an unwitting and unwise speaker, that, falling upon the responsive soil of a youthful nature, springs up and bears fruit in words and deeds of shame and bitterness. What a fine encomium was pronounced upon one of our martyred presidents in the words, "He wore the white flower of a blameless life." Some of our so-called wits and after dinner speakers would think more seriously of what they say in public gatherings, if they realized the balefulness of an incident related by them to provoke a laugh, that had in it an element that was lacking in cleanliness and wholesomeness.

To keep clean mentally, means, too, to keep the heart and mind stored with choice things and to crowd out the bad and the vicious. "Tell that story to Gladstone," said a brilliant member of Parliament to one of his colleagues in a great London Club. The Grand Old Man had just entered the room, but a discreet silence fell upon the speaker. He would not dare tell the Prime Minister the incident he had so glibly related. Why? Because of the cleanly character of Gladstone, that forbade everything that savored of indecency.

Let us keep clean. Let us have about us books and objects that make for clean thinking and wholesome living. Let us avoid any form of drama, however highly recommended by so-called critics, that smacks of the impure. Let us regard with suspicion and contempt any one who acts as the channel or transmitter of that which is unwholesome or unclean.

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THE BETTER COUNTRY

SPEAKING of a group of men and women who had lived the heroic life, the writer of the Book of Hebrews says: "They were strangers and pilgrims on the earth," and he adds, "But now they desire a better country." The passage suggests the life of the pioneer. It seems to say to us that life is an unending search for new frontiers. It also seems to suggest that dissatisfaction in one form or another marks every forward step in the progress of mankind. Somebody once said: "Man is an eternal becoming," and a New Testament writer says: "It doth not yet appear what we shall be."

There is a kind of dissatisfaction with life's conditions that is far from commendable. It is the dissatisfaction of the one who is unworthy or incapable of better things. The dissatisfactions that have marked the forward movements of the race have been born of nobler impulses. Had it not been for the dissatisfaction of our fathers with old world conditions, America had not been born. Had it not been for the restlessness of the world's great dreamers, the story of our marvelous age of invention, with its myriad mechanisms for greater human comfort and convenience, would not have been. The upward

reach of the human mind away from old and unsatisfying conditions has determined and fixed the progress of mankind from age to age. Yes, life is an unending search for new frontiers. We are ever crying for new worlds to conquer. All science, all art, all literature, all statesmanship, all inventive genius, has progressed only as it has pressed forward to new frontiers and achievements. Standing at our present place of vantage, our occupied territory, we reach out as pilgrims, as adventurers, for new fields of conquest. What of the soul's aspiration? Beecher once said: "Our yearnings are our homesicknesses for heaven." Is it not true that we are never wholly satisfied here? Is there not something in man that cries out for the better country? No matter what our environing conditions may be, there is that within us that ever anticipates and looks forward to something better and finer. Oliver Wendell Holmes had this in mind when he wrote in his Chambered Nautilus:

> "Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
> As the swift seasons roll;
> Leave thy low-vaulted past;
> Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
> Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast.
> 'Till thou at length art free,
> Leaving thine outgrown shell
> By life's unresting sea."

The whole conception of life as a pilgrimage, as a migration from frontier to frontier, has occupied the greatest, as well as the simplest minds of all ages. Says Sir Oliver Lodge: "I am as convinced of continued existence on the other side of death as I am of existence here," and he further says: "I believe that the call of Christ Himself will be attended to by a large part of humanity in the near future, as never yet it has been heard

or attended to on earth." We heartily agree with this, and we further believe that the present world-dissatisfaction with things as they are is to spell out a finer and better world here and a more evident and certain world hereafter. We are dissatisfied and we admit it. We are strangers and pilgrims on the earth and we know it. We desire a better country, and we believe we shall have it.

* * *

QUIETNESS AND CONFIDENCE

IN the words of the ancient Prophet, we have an admonition that every one of us must heed at this time of a great world-crisis: "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength."

Somehow or other we seem to have the notion that in noise and excitement reside the strength of the nation. We charged the French with being mercurial, and they seemed to be all this before the war, but there is probably not a stabler or more compact nation in the world today than France. It has been sobered by a great crisis. H. G. Wells, if he is to be regarded as an interpreter of English thought and life, in his fascinating book, "Mr. Britling Sees It Through," maintains that England has been aroused from her stupor, lethargy and arrogance and made to see as never before, the foolishness of conceit and self-pride. From a position of indifference to the things of religion, as Mr. Wells sees it, she has come along the way, until today, through sacrifices on the field of battle she is crying out, even in her anguish and pain,—"Our sons have shown us God."

America has much of which to boast. Her develop-

ment is stranger and more fascinating than an Arabian Night's Tale. Behind all her show of commercialism and prosperity, we believe she has a soul, but she has now reached the time in the great world-crisis when this soul with all its stored up strength and power must be made evident.

The kind of quietness the Prophet calls for, is not the quietness of self-ease or self-assurance. It is the quietness that is born of a reasonable confidence in the things of character, and of unfailing belief in the supervising and directing power of the Almighty. It is safe to say there can be no confidence without quietness. Noise and bluster do not produce confidence, in either the individual or the nation. Quietness is conducive to sanity and is one of the outstanding marks of world statesmanship. Quietness will not prompt us to hastily draw the sword or shoulder the musket. A cheap, superficial statesmanship will always disclose itself in bluster and banter; a profound and efficient statesmanship will disclose itself in quietness and confidence. A nation with a "chip on its shoulder" is a nation that lacks these characteristics.

The people of this land today, need to be seriously and solemnly admonished concerning these two vital things: they must exercise reasonable quietness in the face of the world-storm, else the Ship of State in which they sail may experience a serious situation; and, again, they must disclose such a confidence, both in their fellows and in the God who directs all things, that there shall result a greater national solidarity, less of undue self-pride and vain shouting about the things of prosperity, and a profounder respect for the things of character.

One man of character, possessed of quietness and confidence, is worth more to the State in the time of its

need than ten thousand noisy, blustering, inefficient citizens. We submit that neither quietness nor confidence can come to a people who lack the God-consciousness. Nations that believe solely in the power of the sword must hear again the ancient, divine word:—"They that take the sword shall perish with the sword." This nation is called to its knees in prayer. To live as conscious only of human power and human strength at such a time as this, is to be disloyal to the great things for which this nation stands, and to violate the traditions of its fathers.

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DILIGENT IN BUSINESS

"SEEST thou a man diligent in business; he shall stand before kings." It hardly seems possible that these words are to be found in the Bible, and yet they are. When one stops to reflect, it is amazing to note how many of the common conceptions of life that we hold today, are rooted in the world's greatest book. Every now and again someone speaks of the impracticableness of the Bible, its lack of modernness, its incapacity when it comes to the things of common everyday life. The Bible, as a book, is as valuable in a twentieth century home or temple of industry as it is in the Christian Church. It is vital with life.

The passage quoted above is suggestive of the place of distinction and honor that is occupied by the man who is diligent in business. The standard of excellence stated here, be it noted, is not to be found in the fact that a man is successful in business, that he has made

money; the one thing is, that he is diligent; therefore shall he "stand before kings."

There are thousands of men who meet this condition, men whose names are not chronicled in headlines of newspapers or in "Who's Who." The engineer in the cab with his hand on the throttle, directing the movements of the train at fifty miles an hour, if he be diligent in the discharge of his duties, is in many respects more important and is charged with far greater responsibilities than the general manager of the road, seated at his desk, handling the intricate problems of transportation. Both are necessary, but we submit that the place of responsibility is in the engine cab.

The fact that a man is "absorbed in business" is no reason for condemning him, provided he is absorbed in the right way. Some men who were far from diligent, have stood before kings, but sooner or later the world discovers their weaknesses and condemns their counterfeit characters.

Religion is one of the great, vital forces that makes a man diligent in business. Today, deeper inquiry is being made in the business world, concerning the character of its applicants for position. Freshness, spontaneity, cleverness, mental alertness, all these, are indispensable, but greater than all, is the thing we call character, and the man who is really diligent, is the man who first, last and always stands for the high ideals of character. Take religion out of business and a panic ensues. Take business out of religion and it becomes chaotic and inefficient. That the "Master-Workman" who told the story of the workers in the vineyard, respected the fidelity and devotion of the worker in any sphere of human service, is perfectly evident. We believe that every church that is truly representing Him is immediately related to the

concerns of business, and we further believe that where it is a center of inspiration and power, it is a distinct contributor to efficiency and diligence in the commercial world.

* * *

THE OLD LAW AND THE NEW

IT is a far reach from the stern law of the ancient Hebrews as given by Moses to the new law as given and practiced by Jesus Christ. All too frequently we are told that religion is so far removed from the common things of life that it does not intimately affect them. The critic declares that religion as a system is impractical and that it does not deal with life's large and important questions. No one who is familiar with the New Testament or the teachings of Christ will for a moment maintain this. He sought to lay down rules for human conduct that affect all forms and conditions of life and in no place was He more specific than in the Sermon on the Mount: "It hath been said: an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you—"

During the past critical years a great controversy has arisen over the attitude of Jesus towards the things of war, and the world has been divided into two opposing camps. The one maintained that in the teaching set forth in the above text he inveighs against all forms of war both defensive and offensive. The other has, we believe, with larger wisdom maintained that the whole attitude and teaching of Christ recognizes the righteousness of upholding individual and national honor and integrity, even with force. We have come to believe that there is a kind of pacifism wholly inconsistent with His teachings

and that witnesses to disregard of the very fundamental things of life and character.

Tolstoy in his book, "My Religion," takes this text as the basis of his whole argument and lifts non-resistance into a place of supreme distinction and excellence. We do not believe that the modern world can follow him in his reasoning. There is such a thing as righteous indignation and again there is such a thing as the honorable and vigorous defense of one's principles. Such an attitude in no wise contravenes the express teachings of Jesus. But the war is over, and we are again seeking to bring to bear upon all our human problems this divine word, and we cannot but think that it must have vital application to those stirring questions that to-day agitate the whole world.

How are we to deal with those who differ from us, whether at home or abroad, and how are we to solve our complex problems and differences? Surely not by violent and bitter controversy; surely not by crimination and recrimination; and certainly not by acts of violence. The German junker and his ilk despised the teachings of the mild and gentle Nazarene, but thoughtful men are coming to realize to-day that these teachings, practically applied, constitute the main solvent of our riddles. We may not and we dare not continue to go on in life's course exercising a malevolent or ungenerous spirit towards those who have hitherto been our enemies.

Whether we like it or not, the method of Jesus is the only one that will bring us back again to the habits and practices of normal life. We shall punish where punishment is deserved, but we shall not exact an eye for an eye, or a tooth for a tooth. We shall resist evil and we hope curb and cure it by a policy consistent with our religious faith. Hard as it is for us to understand

that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the whole earth," and however we may differ in racial customs and practices, we must come to realize that too exacting penalties and too stern judgments do not make for permanent peace or order.

No man ever hated sin as Jesus Christ did, and yet He accomplished marvelous changes in human life by overcoming sin through love of the sinner. Whether we deal with a wayward child, a rebellious element in the community, or a selfish and sinning State, we need to learn the new law which transcends the old, and by an attitude of consistent practice and reasonable Christian charity maintain peace and good-will among men.

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MOBILIZE

THAT the Founder of Christianity expected and looked for the intimate fellowship of His believers is unquestioned and unchallenged. "That they all may be one," He said. Of course, He reckoned with the divergencies in human nature, even as He reckoned with the varying temperaments of His disciples. We do not believe He sought for precise uniformity of religious practice, but He did emphasize the great essential of unity.

We have fallen upon a time when the demand for this greater fellowship among Christian believers is imperative and indispensable. We believe that the mobilization of the world's Christian forces is one of the tragic demands of the hour. For our own part, we have come to believe that an insular church is an insolent church, and

that some form of federation must come, before the Church shall resume its place of leadership in the new period of reconstruction. The whole drift or tendency of our age is toward mobilization of forces. In industry and in the State we are witnessing this mobilization today, especially here in America, as we have never known it before. In the face of this tendency are we, the conservators of religion, the accredited representatives of that character-making power, without which there can come no new world-cosmos out of the present world-chaos, to go on without the mobilization of our forces, scattering our fire and wasting our energies, while the mighty enemy triumphs over the minds and wills of men?

We cannot believe it. We are at the greatest crisis the Church has faced in its whole history. The very foundations themselves seem to be upheaved, and the whole fabric is endangered. From all parts of the world there is heard the yearning cry of men for religion, the religion of the Man of Nazareth, undiluted by any peculiar brand of denominational pride or conceit. Nothing is more tragic than the failure of the great Christian Church of every name to seize opportunities as they come, and by concentrated effort to utilize them for the salvation of men. The world today is literally staggering and bewildered in its search for leadership and a sustaining religious conviction, and confronted with this condition, we dare not be mere purveyors of denominational wares and nostrums. Let there be variety in form, but let there be unfailing unity in those fundamentals that underlie and render valid all forms.

Mobilize! Mobilize!—this is the clear, clarion call of the hour, and woe betide the Church if it fails to meet it! The churches of this land represent in a very real

way its character-making forces. If they are to do their work with any measure of efficiency, especially during the critical days that lie ahead, they must be so intimately related in their large enterprise that there shall be neither friction nor competition nor anything that shall give the enemy occasion or opportunity for a successful attack by front or flank. Let us have done with cheap, sentimental expressions of unity that only serve to mislead the mind of the people, and, with a true spirit of devotion to our great Captain, effect a unity that is both practicable and Christian.

There are clearly defined grounds of agreement and there is a common, universally recognized basis for cooperation and fellowship, and that basis at present is the recognition of the Saviourhood of Jesus Christ and the world's appalling need of Him. For the sake of homes and firesides, for the sake of altars and pulpits, for the sake of a distracted, disillusioned and discouraged world; yes, for the sake of the saving of the multitude wandering along the world's broad highways without God and without hope, let us so federate the divided forces of Christendom that the lowly Christ shall be lifted up and become regnant in the hearts of men.

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AN ADMIRAL'S GREAT MESSAGE

"RIGHTEOUSNESS exalteth a nation, sin is a reproach to any people." These words have never had, in our knowledge, a finer interpreter than Sir David Beatty, the great admiral of the English fleet. A message delivered by him as a commander in the early days of the war has an import and a significance that

may well challenge the serious heed of America at this critical time. He said:

> "Surely Almighty God doesn't intend this war to be just a hideous fracas or a blood-drunken orgy. There must be a purpose in it. In what direction? France has already shown us the way and has risen, out of her ruined cities, with a revival of religion that is wonderful. England still remains to be taken out of the stupor of self-satisfaction and complacency in which her flourishing condition has steeped her. Until she can be stirred out of this condition, until a religious revival takes place, just so long will the war continue. When she can look on the future with humbler eyes and a prayer on her lips, then we can begin to count the days towards the end."

If this momentous utterance had application to the people of England in the early days of the war, shall we not believe that it has peculiar application to the people of our own land in the present critical hour? It suggests to us those lines of Kipling in his "Recessional":

> "If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
> Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe,
> Such boastings as the Gentiles use
> Or lesser breeds without the law,
> Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
> Lest we forget, lest we forget."

Behind all true and abiding greatness, either in individual or corporate life resides righteousness, a religious conviction, however expressed, that stands for right-dealing and a wholesome recognition of the life and

purposes of Almighty God in the affairs of men. We assume that the Admiral was not advocating the revival of an emotional and insipid kind of religious fervor, that expresses itself in cheap forms of cant or Pharisaic self-righteousness. We are heartily sick of all this, and it appeals neither to our imagination or our judgment. Nor again, was he seeking to accentuate any peculiar brand of righteousness, however ancient its traditions or justified its usages. He was demanding as the very prime requisite of efficiency, a revival of sound, sane, practical religion in the life of the people. There is much danger that in our very proper enthusiasm for the boys in khaki, we shall forget that behind the man behind the gun must reside strength of character, and that behind character must stand, as the fixed and unchanging mainspring of conduct, reverence for and obedience to the known will of God, and a love for men that discloses itself in just and fair dealing. We may prate as we will about the need for far-reaching changes or reforms in our systems, political, economic and social, but the testimony of the ages bears eloquent evidence to the force of the words of our text: "Righteousness exalteth a nation, sin is a reproach to any people." Cromwell's invincible "Ironsides" went forth from their knees, to defeat an arrogant imperial army. We have too long relegated religion to a place of unimportance; we have too long toyed with it as an æsthetic bauble; yes, we have too long "tolerated" it as a social agency; let us begin to deal with it as the preserving salt in our individual and corporate life. "When she can look on the future with humbler eyes, and a prayer on her lips, then we can begin to count the days towards the end." Words worthy of a commander, bravely spoken and divinely inspired.

"PRAYER HAS ENLIGHTENED MY WAY"

GENERAL FERDINAND FOCH is regarded as the greatest general that the world has ever known and the army he commanded is the largest any single leader ever directed. So rapid was the progress of this army and so wonderful the method by which he handled it that the world was a-tiptoe with curiosity to learn the secret of his genius.

Great men, as a rule, are to the public gaze shrouded in mystery, and the notion prevails that they have some utterly secret method by and through which they exercise their amazing power. Not so with Foch; there are no secrets about him, and with the frankness of a child he uncovers to the world what he holds to be the source of his strength and the inspiration of his genius. Here is his own testimony: "I approach the end of my life with the conscience of a faithful servant, who reposes in the peace of the Lord. Faith in life eternal, in a God of goodness and compassion, has sustained me in the most trying hours. *PRAYER HAS ENLIGHTENED MY WAY.*" It is reported of him, that, daily, even while directing the movements of vast armies, he retired into the silences for his devotions.

It is worthy of remark that the outstanding leaders in the field, who today are masters of great armies are without exception, by their own confession, men of prayer. Joffre, Petain, Haig, Pershing, Foch and Grand Admiral Sir David Beatty make open acknowledgment of the fact that prayer and the consciousness of the presence of God constitute the source of their power and genius, and to these they attribute whatever success has attended them.

It was said of the Son of Man that, "as He prayed the fashion of His countenance was altered." Sublime and faultless as was His life, He experienced the renewing and invigorating power which comes alone from prayer. How all this blends with the word of the great English poet:

> "More things are wrought by prayer
> Than this world dreams of."

There are no systems of measurement and no scales, however delicately constructed, that can give us the dimensions or the proportions of that subtle power we call prayer, and yet, today, the world's greatest marshal declares "Prayer has enlightened my way."

Who would venture to compute the weight of the burdens imposed upon this great leader in the dark days of last spring and in the critical days of midsummer? We have been told how he struggled to know the hour and the place at which to give the blow that would mark the beginning of the decline and fall of autocratic power. If ever the evidences of righteous leadership have been witnessed in the affairs of men, surely they have been disclosed in the marvelous happenings of the past three months.

Men have sought to define and analyze prayer, they have discussed it, they have been awed by its strange power, they have at times repudiated it and tried to forget it, and yet, in the hour of supreme need they have invoked its influence. There are so many mighty forces with which we have to do and that we use and harness for our service that even the scientists cannot explain, that it were well for us at such a time as the present to remember that prayer is the greatest dynamic, the greatest unused power of which the world

today is conscious. It is our conviction that we are to be enlightened on the new way that shall lead the world on and up to higher and better things, not because of any material greatness we possess, but because we have learned again the meaning of that great word: "Be still, and know that I am God."

* * *

THE CHURCH AND LABOR

OVER the world today discussion is rife as to the relation the Church, as an institution, should bear to the large interests of labor. In some places we are told that labor, as organized, not only regards the church as unsympathetic and uninformed as to its needs, but that its whole attitude for a generation past has been inimical to the interests of labor. We have been told by some writers that where the name of Jesus Christ is greeted with applause in labor meetings the name of His Church is met with sneers of derision. We think this an overstatement of the case.

On the other hand, it is becoming increasingly evident that an institution that is supposed to stand for the whole interests of man should disclose some intelligent concern for those things that have to do with his bodily and physical needs. To the consciousness of the average worker the church seems to be too other-worldly; it appears to deal too much in promissory notes, the payment of which is guaranteed in some far off time.

In the main, the training of the clergy in colleges and seminaries does not contemplate any large or practical knowledge of those questions that have to do with in-

dustrial or social conditions. We submit that this is a serious misfortune. On the other hand, the average minister is so placed that he is not brought into immediate contact with those vital questions that relate to social, industrial and political questions. Few men in the ministry disclose any great aptitude in these matters. Beyond this the average layman does not regard his church as an enterprise that has to do with matters of this kind. It is our judgment that in these things both the clergy and the church need education and intelligent direction. We believe that religion contemplates life here in all its aspects as well as life hereafter.

The Church, as an institution, will probably never determine wage scales, but it can affect mightily the principles that govern wage scales, and further than this, if its effort is intelligently directed and all its interests coordinated, it can accomplish immeasurable good in improving living conditions and raising the whole standard of life to higher levels. We may never forget, except to our hurt, that the Master of the Church was Himself an artisan, schooled in the carpenter shop at Nazareth.

In a recent conversation with one of the most intelligent and consistent leaders of labor in this country, he stated definitely that, in his observation in one of our great cities, the church had never manifested in any direct or practical way either its interest in or concern for the things of labor. We believe it is not enough that we shall from week to week stand for the practice of the Golden Rule or emphasize those eternal principles that have to do with human interests. We must be intelligently and sympathetically related to the actual problems and by all the influence we can command, seek to effect their solution. The time has come when both capital and labor must recognize that Christianity and the

church have a supremely important place in all the common concerns of everyday life.

It would be both informing and inspiring to the ministers of the church if they would seek to relate themselves more intimately and effectively to those concerns that have to do with economic conditions. There are too many church programs that merely contemplate church extension here and abroad along old and traditional lines. It is becoming evident that we need less of church extension and more of the practical teaching and application of the principles of the church's Master to world conditions.

All this has its application, not only to the clergy, but to those who profess to be followers of the Master. The opportunity is infinite to interpret His mind to all forms of our social, economic and political institutions. While there may be a great difference of opinion among the churches as to the proper methods to be employed to get men into the Kingdom of Heaven, there should be unanimity of opinion as to the best method of getting the Kingdom of Heaven into the world in which we live.

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SUSPENDED MORAL CONVICTIONS

SOMETIMES a single paragraph expresses the moral cowardice or the moral heroism of people, and furnishes an index to their character. It was written concerning certain men, with reference to their lack of expressed religious conviction, that "many believed on Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him." And, again, as an excuse for this moral cowardice, it was

said that "they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."

One of the tragic things about the life of the world's Master is the acknowledgment by men of His supremely beautiful teachings and His altogether blameless life, and yet their wilful failure to accept His leadership. A Roman soldier once said "Never man spake like this man," and this we believe is the universal verdict.

A distinguished Englishman has declared in a remarkable book, that, in the present crisis, it is the spirit of the Corsican against the spirit of the Christ. In other words, men are being forced to accept the ideals of the one or the other. The ideals of the Corsican stand for the things of passion and ambition and self-satisfaction; the ideals of the Christ stand for a selfless service, the recognition of and obedience to moral law, the safeguarding of the sweet and wholesome and worth-while things of life, and the unfailing pursuit of high spiritual ideals.

There are two principal motives that seem to operate in restraining men from making a definite declaration of allegiance to Christ—first, fear of the world's criticism; second, a misconception of His claims.

It is almost universally true that the desire for the praise of men hinders, if it does not wholly restrain, an open acknowledgment of fealty to the Master. Even in so simple a matter as the saying of one's prayers there seems to be a kind of moral cowardice disclosed. So-called strong men will sometimes yield their practice of pronounced religious expression in the presence of those who differ from them. They have no fear in declaring their allegiance to political parties or social enterprises, but somehow an open expression of religious conviction seems to appall them. They believe on Him, but because of the Pharisees, they do not confess Him. It is a case

of what someone calls, "suspended moral convictions." Frequently it takes a crisis or a tragedy in one's life to break down and overcome this apathy or cowardice. We do not begin to realize what an effect environing conditions have upon our religious faith and practice. Suffice it to say that any form of religious expression that is wholly governed by environing conditions is unworthy, and betrays an evidence of moral cowardice.

A misconception as to the claims of Christ is a further deterrent. Somehow or other the notion seems to obtain that loyalty to Christian ideals implies a renunciation of all those attractive and fascinating things that make for human satisfaction and profit. We submit that this is not so. There is nothing that is wholesomely worth while in this world, that a loyal following of the Master precludes or denies.

Christianity calls forth the heroic; it is a practice or habit of life that defies all criticism and persists in the face of all opposition. It is the open profession of allegiance to the world's Master Man and it challenges the best that is in us.

* * *

A LOOK AHEAD

STANDING on an eminence overlooking the battlefield of Marengo, Napoleon saw the French lines broken by the terrific impact of the Austrian forces. Presently an orderly dashed up to the invincible fighter and said: "Sire, the French line is broken and is in full retreat." Without a moment's pause the master of strategy answered: "Tell the commanders to re-form the line." Before the sun had set on that eventful day, the French

line had been re-formed and "had plucked victory from the spear point of defeat." After the great war the call to the nations of the world today is: "Re-form the line."

A great student of human affairs once said that "many times in the history of humankind it had seemed that the people were ready to take a momentous step forward under conditions miraculously prepared, but just when everything was ready, at the very last moment they had looked back for one farewell glance, and then never advanced." The obvious reasons for this failure to go forward were undue timidity on the one hand and conscienceless leadership on the other.

The French Revolution was marked by brutal and selfish leadership in its early stages (and in this respect the Russian Revolution parallels it), but when once the vision of the people was clarified and the self-seeking leaders were dispossessed there emerged a great and stable nation whose watchwords were: "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity."

It is hard for men to break with traditions or with their personal conceits, and it is still harder for them to abandon their selfish ambitions and satisfactions. Today, however, new conceptions and new forces that have to do with human affairs have come into being, and a conservatism that seeks to cling to the old order is losing its grip. There are, doubtless, many who are fearful of what is to be done on the morrow, and they are evidently startled by the statement that was recently made—"America can never be the same as it was before the war." We are clear that this statement is true, but we look to see a greater and better America than we have hitherto known.

Underlying the world's restlessness (and this is its universal symptom today), there is a yearning for better

conditions in all the departments and concerns of human life. Every one of us must front this new period with a determination to make our contribution, however it may violate our cherished notions, to the lifting up and enriching of all kinds and conditions of men. It has been reserved for our time to emphasize what has been called the "social implications of the Gospel." We had thought that religion was unrelated to the wage scale, better housing conditions, clean politics and all that has to do with the physical well-being of our fellows. Now we are to understand more clearly what Jesus meant when He said: "I have made a man every whit whole."

It has been said that "the nineteenth century made the world a neighborhood, the twentieth must make it a brotherhood." We are all, young and old alike, compelled at the beginning of the New Year to make certain resolutions concerning our relations to our fellows, and it seems to us that the exigencies of the present hour demand that we shall solemnly resolve at this time to do everything in our power, to hasten to set forward a finer expression and realization of the saner brotherhood of mankind. Let us be perfectly clear that this resolution must carry with it a determination to make sacrifices, however exacting they may be, that all the world may enjoy the "more abundant life" that Jesus of Nazareth came to bring.

* * *

SEEING LIFE RIGHT

"THE place whereon thou standest is holy ground." In a notable essay on personality, a great writer contends that, before we are capable of consciously realizing any attainment, we must develop a capacity for it;

muddy waters cannot reflect the stars. He says "All the pride and pleasure of the world mirrored in the dull consciousness of a fool is poor indeed compared with the imagination of Cervantes writing his Don Quixote in a miserable prison."

Before we can come to even a small measure of attainment, intellectual or spiritual, we must be made receptive to it. In other words, we must will to be. Mirabeau once said: "Nothing is impossible to the man who can will." We may not all come to a place of national, local or even community leadership, but we may, through the consciousness of the sacredness of life, make it something more than a monotonous, soulless, humdrum sort of an existence. Most of us seem to think that efficiency in life consists in having something. Again and again someone will say: "If I could only have wealth, or power, or influence, I would be able to do my large part in the world."

The history of mankind does not seem to indicate that those who have been the possessors of things, or even of wealth, have been the world's greatest benefactors. Indeed, it would almost seem that poverty itself, coupled with a right conception of life, constituted the very essentials of genius. It is not the man or woman who amasses a fortune, however honestly, and at death leaves it in the form of bequests, who contributes most largely to the weal and happiness of the world. It is those who live day by day with a high consciousness of stewardship and a large sense of responsibility for playing the game of life fairly, honestly, and with a due sense of obligation to those about them, that really contribute to the happiness of their fellows and become benefactors of their kind.

Jacob Riis died at the age of 65. He was poor, as men reckon wealth, but Roosevelt once said of him that he was

"one of the most useful citizens of New York city." Why? Because he sought to learn "how the other half lives," and having learned it, to do his heroic part in bettering conditions. To him, the place where he stood was holy ground, and he consecrated his talents and his zeal to the bettering of human conditions in the slums of a great city.

A negro slave boy in the South had a like vision of the sacredness of life, as well as of its vast opportunities, and he resolved to dedicate all that he was and had to the bettering of the conditions of his race. Booker T. Washington did more to emancipate the minds of his people and to render them efficient citizens of the nation than any other single man in our recent history.

During these past years, the value of things has depreciated, while the value of character and of real worth has grown immeasurably in the estimation of men. Cardinal Mercier was hardly known outside of little Belgium at least to the American people, before the war. He had neither the wealth nor the weapons with which to resist the invader, but he had that which was infinitely greater. Fearlessly and with a high consciousness of the sacredness of his office, he withstood the tyrant's autocratic sway, and he stands today as one of the really great and commanding figures of the war period.

As we front the New Year, it is a good time to readjust our notions concerning life. We do not have to be preachers or philanthropists to serve either God or humanity. There is not one of us so poor but has some quality, some gift, some talent that, recognized and used and practically adapted to the world's needs, can serve to better human conditions, making this old world, with all its selfishness and greed, a fitter place in which to live.

A pretty good resolution at this time for all of us would

be, to look upon life as a sacred trust, to think of it as an opportunity, to regard service to others not as an obligation, but rather as a privilege, to think of such gifts and qualities as we have as investments which God Almighty has made in us, that are to be used in the interests of our fellows. The commonest task and the lowliest occupation take on a divine splendor when they are regarded as means of service for others. We have always liked that word:

"I shall pass through this world but once. Any kind word that I may say or any kind deed that I may do, let me say and do it now, for I shall not pass this way again."

* * *

THE OLD-TIME RELIGION

A PROMINENT railroad man said to us a short time ago: "There is a widespread revival of interest in matters religious, and on every hand today I hear men talking of things that we seem to have forgotten or have long neglected. I believe the church is to come into its own and that the world is to evince a larger interest in religion than it has ever shown before." This statement is by no means an isolated one, but is a common expression that one hears daily and in the most unexpected places.

If it discloses an awakened interest in religion, it is very proper to ask, what kind of religion does it demand? Some one says, "it is not a religion of creeds or formularies;" another says, "it is not a religion that manifests itself once a week in churches;" and still another maintains that "it is not a religion circumscribed or limited or, in other words, denominational in its character." There

may be partial truth in all these statements, but we may never forget that religion, like all other schemes or plans that have to do with life, must have definite and prescribed methods or forms and that it must operate through well organized and well conceived agencies. In other words, it is inconceivable that religion is to play its large part in the world's reconstruction, unless it is well organized, clearly expressed and splendidly administered.

Religion, to be operative, must be defined, and, further than this, it must have agencies for its expression and propagation. It may be said in all humility that the church, in some respects, has signally failed, and, again, that no church is the depository of the sum total of truth; but, when this has been said, let us not forget that churches express temperamental qualities and differences, and to construct a plan or organization that all men are compelled to recognize, and without which they cannot be religious or worship in a corporate way, means to deny the universal temperamental differences that very properly segregate us into groups and classes.

No matter what we may think about these matters, one thing is clearly evident, religion, which is the expression of the "life of God in the soul of man," is the most conspicuous need of the present hour. Sabatier was unquestionably right when he said, "Man is incurably religious," and the present and insistent demand for a finer expression of religious conviction is becoming more and more evident.

Most of us received our earliest and, perhaps noblest conceptions of religion at our mother's knee. God evidently ordained womankind to be the primary interpreter of his truths to his children. No matter how far we may go afield, in our better hours we all cherish the religion of our childhood. The old-fashioned religion that

mother used to give us was a religion that had to do with the things of conduct and character. It may have been very simple in form, but, after all, it was based upon the great essentials, and it maintained that the profession of the lips and the habit of life must be consistent and balanced.

We are going to have, perhaps, many varieties of expression of religion in the new age ahead, but it is our unfailing conviction that the religion that will have the most permanent value in the reconstruction of the state and our social institutions will be the religion that harks back to those basic and fundamental truths that are vitally and essentially related to the things of habit and conduct.

Jesus Christ is and will remain the world's supreme interpreter of religion, and all roads of thought today lead up to Him who declared Himself to be "the Way, the Truth and the Life."

* * *

THE BOOK IN THE FURNACE

IT IS safe to say that no book in the world has been put to such utterly severe and exacting tests as the Bible. It has borne the white light of criticism for generations. It has been subjected to the most careful analysis by the world's greatest scholars, and every known method of so-called textual criticism has been applied to it. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure."

The controversy as to the authenticity of the works of Shakespeare and the effort to trace their authorship to Bacon has been long and persistent. We recall that one

of the greatest living Shakespeare scholars once told us that, in this profoundly great work, there were approximately seven outstanding, competent Shakespeare critics in this country. Against this, we may safely say that there are literally thousands of thoroughly competent, deeply learned, analytical critics of the Bible in this country, and thousands upon thousands more throughout the world.

Not only is this true of our day and generation, but it is true of every age and period. So assured were those who attacked the validity and authority of the Bible in the eighteenth century, that they confidently declared that the religion of the Bible would not last out half a century. In one form or another, this statement has been repeatedly made, and yet even the severest critics must admit that the Bible as a book occupies a larger place in the world's thought today than it has ever occupied before.

We recall that, when the so-called modernists, whose work of criticism began in the latter half of the nineteenth century, were using their scalpels to dissect this Book, widespread fear was expressed that its truths were to be undermined and its power as an ethical and spiritual guide utterly destroyed. With assurance we can say that, on the contrary, this very criticism has resulted in the entrenching of the Book in the affections of the people, and in large part it has cleared the way for a better comprehension of its mighty truths, and made more evident its unfailing stability and strength. The literature of this Book has impregnated the literature of the world. A group of English scholars discussing this matter one day, made the statement that, were the Bible lost in its present integrity, it could be almost completely recovered from a search through the world's general literature. There

might be some omissions, but the fundamental things would be preserved.

Few of us ever stop to reflect upon the fact that the gathering together of these 66 books of the Bible and the careful examination of the original Hebrew and Greek text in which the books have come down to us, was the work, not of one group in one isolated period, but of many groups in many periods, and that the work of research and examination was more exacting and precise than that applied to any other book of which we have knowledge. It has been examined word by word, microscopically. Its literature and its subject matter have been compared with every known religious literature. Its profoundest and supremest teacher, Jesus Christ, has been studied as no other teacher or exponent of truth that the world has produced. He has been compared with other great religious leaders, and every such study of Him has left Him in isolated grandeur.

One of the interesting things about this Book has been its influence, not only upon the habits, but upon the thought life of the world's great leaders. It has literally saturated them and given to their utterances and writings a quality that no other book imparts. To the peerless Webster and to the great commoner, John Bright, as well as other outstanding statesmen in modern history, the Bible has been a fountain and source of inspiration. Of the great Rufus Choate, the peerless Nestor of the bar, it was said, "this Book, so early absorbed and never forgotten, saturated his mind and spirit more than any other, more than all other books combined. It was at his tongue's end, at his fingers' ends—always close at hand until those last languid hours at Halifax, when it solaced his dying meditations. You can hardly find speech, argument, or lecture of his, from first to last, that is not

sprinkled and studded with biblical ideas and pictures, and biblical words and phrases."

The Bible makes no apology for its place of permanent distinction, and whether read with the eye of the untutored or the eye of the scholar, it stands the test, and out of the furnace of controversy, it emerges triumphant.

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"HECKLING THE CHURCH"

NOTHING has been more popular during the past two years than for writers, clerical and lay, to submit articles or to make speeches designed to show the utter insufficiency, fallacy, and insanity of many of the Church's methods and more particularly the gross incompetency and narrowness of the Church's leaders. In the main, these writers and speakers are the ordained servants of the Church. Perhaps they ought to know more about the actual conditions than any others, and yet, it is passing strange that they "foul their own nest" by sweeping statements and large generalizations in which they condemn the whole system of which they are a part.

Perhaps it is good to witness this form of self-examination and seeming humility. All too frequently the clergy as a class are charged with being arrogant, conceited, and dogmatic. That there is need for improving conditions in the Church goes without saying. That we are over-churched in some communities and under-churched in others is also true. Denominational rivalries and competitions have become a nuisance and a disgrace, and in this there is ground for reasonable criticism.

On the other hand, we believe it may be stated that

the clergy of this and other lands have averaged up fairly well with other bodies and professions in meeting the demands of the war period. The thousands of Catholic priests in France who responded to the call to the colors and went into the trenches to give their lives for the Republic are a refutation of the statement that the Church has no concern for the things of the State. The ready response of the clergy and Christian men and women generally in all countries to the call for selfless service in Red Cross, Y.M.C.A., Knights of Columbus, Salvation Army, and other noble agencies is a further denial of the frequently made charge that the Church is too otherworldly. It is a singular but conspicuous fact that whenever anything breaks down in our social system the Church is charged with dereliction; on the other hand, whenever things move along normally and all our various agencies efficiently function, there is little said for the institution that constitutes a large part of the source of inspiration and power.

We do believe that now and again there have been marked evidences of narrowness and bigotry in the administration of religious institutions. Again, we submit that all too frequently the whole accent has been placed upon future bliss rather than present world betterment; but our age has witnessed revolutionary changes, not only in the Church's teaching but in the Church's method. There may not be many martyrs in our day, but there are certainly Christian heroes to be found in every town and city ready to spend and be spent, not only that their fellows may have a clearer realization of a future heaven, but a more perfect realization of a better world in which we now live.

It would be more becoming in many of the critics of the Church to lend their influence through co-operation

in bettering conditions as they conceive them, than to stand outside this sacred institution and despoil and defame it as the Germans did the great cathedral at Rheims. After all, the only kind of criticism that is worth while is constructive and co-operative. The clergy are not by any means free from faults, but it is our observation that the vast majority of them are, with great limitations of both means and money, prosecuting a work that calls for harder service, greater tact, finer diplomacy and truer consecration, than that called for by any other occupation with which we are familiar. The war doubtless will effect far-reaching and salutary changes in the Church's system, and we hope we shall have a saner and more consistent religious teaching and practice; but this will be effected through the exacting labors of those on the inside rather than the stone-throwing of those on the outside.

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TRANSFORMED POWER

"THY name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." The man to whom these words were spoken was one whose life up to this point had witnessed to selfishness and self-seeking. Jacob had, by deceit and sharp practice, attained a position of power and influence, but it was power and influence misused and misdirected. He was in his day what men call "prosperous and successful," but like much of such prosperity and success, it did not reckon with the great social plan of things. A certain great captain of industry declared several years ago that he regarded it as a sin

for a man to die rich, and forthwith he undertook to dispense the millions he had accumulated. But, work as he might, and he did it with unusual consistency, he died before his task was accomplished. Doubtless the last twenty years of his long and eventful life were the happiest he experienced. Like Jacob, he reached the point where he realized that mere self-seeking and self-having were unworthy and unsatisfactory ends. It is amazing how few of us realize the real purpose of life, and at the same time its deeper joys, until we have passed into the period that men call old age. Jacob, by ordinary standards, was a respectable member of society. He doubtless made ample provision for his own household and was generous to his own immediate servants. But his life was narrow, insular and selfish for all that. He had come to the great crisis in his experience, where he was returning to an environment that he had dishonored and that promised no assurance of welcome. He was driven to think seriously of the consequences of his sins and mistakes, and it was while in deep reflection, coupled no doubt with sincere penitence, that he was called from his old life and outlook to the new vision of life's larger meaning. His very name, which suggests "supplanter," was changed to Israel, which implies princely gifts of power, power with God and with men. In other words, the real true man, with all the hitherto unrecognized and unused potentialities, emerged. It was not merely a change of name, but rather a change of character, and with the change of character, a new purpose in life.

We recall as we write another notable case of this transformation. Many years ago there came under our observation a man of unusual gifts and power, whose large accumulations of wealth were the result of his genius and application. He had reached three score

years, and up to that time he had interpreted life and its meaning in the terms of self-development and self-having. Suddenly he was arrested by the fact that there was something better to do in the world than to accumulate wealth. Further than this, he realized that if he were to have the experience and joy of doing something for others, it were better to do it before his will was probated. The result of his determination raised him from a position of indifferent regard in the city in which he lived to a place of high distinction and power. He later became the center of the people's affection. In other words, he had power with God and with men, and prevailed.

Where Jesus touched men's lives, he sought to interpret to them the real nobility of service for others. In other words, He transformed them. It is coming to be assumed that no man or woman may have power with their fellows and prevail, unless they have power with God. Said a great author, "the Almighty writes a letter of credit on some men's faces, which is honored wherever presented." Such lives need no human under-writing.

To see men and women struggling to accumulate, simply that they may have, rather than accumulating that they may give, and in giving prevail, is indeed pathetic, if not tragic. After all, power of any kind is valuable only when its true serviceability is realized and applied, and the sooner every one of us begins to realize this fact, the sooner will we create that great fraternity of interests for which the war was fought and for which we believe, under God, it was won.

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THE GREATNESS OF PERSONALITY

"THE spirit of the living creature was in the wheels."

Our age has often been called the "age of the machine," an age in which the value of personality seems to have been neglected. Even man himself has been all too frequently regarded as part of a vast mechanism. This conception of the value of the individual has had a tendency to destroy initiative and weaken ambition. It is interesting to note, however, that in every age the subordination of personality to systems or mechanisms has resulted in ultimate disaster and defeat. Perhaps the most brilliant modern example we have is that of the German army. No more perfect machine has ever been created, and even in its latest hours it moved with marvelous harmony and efficiency, but an army of machine-made soldiers was defeated by an army of men whose initiative and enthusiasm had not been destroyed. It was not numbers or even training, but rather the spirit of the living creature in the wheels that wrought the victory.

America may not be as mature as some of the old world powers, but, up to the present, America has reckoned with the value and importance of a highly developed personality. As we go forward we need to emphasize this more and more, and every agency in the state should be employed to effect this supremely important end.

This has particular application to our religious and educational institutions. It was a brilliant writer who once wrote: "Education that informs only the head and the hand is incomplete, it must inform and train the heart and the will also." We have known men and

women who moved with such precision in thought and action that they suggested to us highly developed machines. We were interested but not inspired by the perfect regularity and seeming accuracy with which they discharged their obligations, but, after all, they were only machines; and they lacked both initiative and originality. They were trained to run in grooves and once out of their normal and fixed habitat they could not efficiently function.

Jesus is the supreme developer of personality and the demonstration of this is to be found in those remarkable men who consorted with Him and whom He actually recreated. He discovered in the fishermen who were His disciples qualities they had never discovered to their own consciousness and in developing these qualities He lifted them to places of supreme power. His whole plan or scheme of life was designed to bring out of men those unrecognized elements that they possessed and to give them a wider field of operation. We think too much of religion in the terms of mechanisms and systems and the church will not do its large work in the world until, like its Master, it seeks for the liberation in man of his highest gifts and qualities of mind and heart.

The world is not so much interested in creeds and formularies as it is in lives that incarnate them and practice them. In other words, Christianity interprets itself through personality, and however much we may need, for the purposes of corporate worship, definite forms, above all else we need today men and women who in themselves are living witnesses. A single glorified personality like that of John Howard, England's great prison reformer, contributes more to the alleviation of unnecessary suffering than a multitude of committees with their wearisome resolutions and good intentions.

There reside in each one of us God-given qualities that constitute our peculiar and unique personality. To bring this personality to its highest development is man's supreme accomplishment.

BEWARE OF A PANIC

WHEN Jesus Christ warned men of impending disasters and declared that multiplied sorrows were coming on the earth, He concluded by saying: "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift your heads for your redemption draweth nigh." The sublimity of His example when He stood alone and unfriended before a Roman governor, and again when He was haled before an illegal tribunal that condemned Him to the tortures of the cross, is the finest exhibition of courage, devotion and freedom from all fear that the world contains. His teachings, that constitute the whole basis of the Christian religion, never reckon with the element of fear, they dismiss it as unworthy of consideration. The Apostle Paul, who caught his inspiration from the example and teaching of Jesus, regarded fear as un-Christian, and he spoke of those who "all their lifetime are subject to bondage through fear." The example of the early Christian church has been largely lost to our present age, and Christian heroism has, in large part, given way to pagan fear.

We have had presented to us on the great battlefields of Europe new interpretations of fearlessness. Major Whittlesey and his ambushed comrades, who refused to surrender, notwithstanding the fact that they were unammunitioned and cut off from retreat, is a signal ex-

ample of what we mean. Here was a former New York man, who two years ago, had no thought of anything other than the pursuits of business, who, with his men, in the hour of a great emergency, disclosed a heroism finer than that of Leonidas. We do not know what men are capable of until they are put to the test.

It ill behooves those of us safely at home, who believe in the superintending providence and care of a great Father, to become panicky because of multiplied disasters. Fires and world-wide epidemics take their toll of life and property. Now, as never before, is the time for the exhibition of Christian fortitude and courage. Now is the time to make our faith a living and sustaining power. Now is the time to demonstrate to the world that we actually live by the things we profess to believe. The vast majority of us here at home are very properly classified by the words of the psalmist, "They were in great fear, where no fear was." We do not mean to imply that blind courage or reckless indifference are the evidence of Christian faith, but we do mean to say that anxious fear is un-Christian and detrimental to the things of body and soul.

Sane precautions and the wise and consistent recognition of rules and regulations that are born out of long experience are indispensable to our individual and corporate well-being, but for professing Christian people to become panicky in times like the present, witnesses to their weakness and to the utter failure of their whole philosophy of life. As a matter of fact, let us acknowledge that many of us accept our Christian beliefs as matters of interest and speculation, rather than as principles that have to do with opinion-making and habit-forming, and that are designed to regulate and control the whole action of life. It is for this reason that all

too frequently the church and Christian people are made the subjects of derision and contempt. We remember seeing carved on an old house in Chester the legend, "God's providence is mine inheritance." The legend stood conspicuously upon the highway to remind the passerby of one of the large facts of life. Let us rebuild the waste places, let us succor the suffering and alleviate the pains of the dying, and let us do all this while we hold to our faith without wavering, believing that, when the storm clouds are past, there must come, in all its fullness and glory, the "new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." Crises may test our faith, they must not destroy it.

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THE JOY OF SERVICE

IN one of Emerson's essays he speaks of some people as having the appearance of being "whipped through the world," and in another place he speaks of certain children as being "dragged up" instead of being brought up. In both cases he is seeking to make clear the difference between living by the rule of "must," and living by the rule of a ready and happy obedience. Perhaps, today, as never before, these distinctions are being made clearer to us in our great camps scattered over the country; and we are happy to say, from personal observation, that the overwhelming majority of the men are, whether conscripted or enlisted, exemplars by rule and conduct of the happy, responsive, and obedient volunteer. In other words, it seems to us that our men have learned the lesson of the text, "If I do this thing willingly, I have a reward."

We believe this view of life is vitally related to its largest efficiency and truest happiness. It discloses itself in the child in the class-room, whose readiness and willingness to accept the discipline of study inevitably results in satisfactory work and the largest mental attainments. Again, this rule practically serves as the dividing line between those in the work-room of industry who live and work by the clock, with resulting indifference and frequent failure, and those who work by the rule of a ready and willing service, and a fine consciousness of responsibility, with the inevitable results—a life of contentment and measurable success. Again, it has its application to all forms of professional life. It is axiomatic that no one succeeds in any high profession, no matter what that profession may be, unless he is truly in love with the thing in which his life is enlisted. Can we imagine a doctor with any degree of efficiency or power without this essential love and devotion? Can we imagine a lawyer, an engineer, or a clergyman discharging the functions of his high office simply for the compensation he receives? Has there ever been any outstanding genius in any realm of life who has not experienced the joy of service and had as his highest reward, not the world's cheap adulation, but the consciousness within himself of work well done?

All the square pegs in round holes, or in other words, all the misfits in life are witnesses to the false theory, that life is a stern and bitter experience and that all its work and service are the exactions of a hard and inexorable taskmaster. We are all agreed, that no soldier is fit to serve his country who feels that he is forced to do so against his own will.

All that we have been saying applies particularly to our religious life. How many young people miscon-

ceive the true values of religion, because of the unwise and oftentimes un-Christian training received in youth. Religion, instead of being the most popular and satisfying experience of life, all too frequently is made the most distasteful and repellant by those who "have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." We have fallen upon a period that must witness to vast and far-reaching changes in many of our systems and methods. Let us hope that among other things the war shall teach us, we may learn that all life's service, in its every form, is rendered efficient and joy-producing only in so far as it is done with glad willingness, with selfless devotion, and with a real vision of its definite and high purpose, which is, to devote the best there is in us to the best ends, and to make the world, for those whose lives we touch and influence, an infinitely happier and more wholesome place in which to live.

THE LAW OF ADAPTATION

"NO MAN putteth new wine into old bottles." Jesus was essentially a modernist. Although an unfailing devotee of the customs of His people, He recognized and obeyed the law of adaptation. In the present instance which the text sets forth, He was seeking to make evident to his critics the new principles that were to govern human life in the changed and changing conditions in the days that were to come. What he actually said was: "No man putteth new wine into old wine skins, else the new wine doth burst the wine skins, the wine is spilled and the wine skins will be marred." He was thinking of those powers gener-

ated through fermentation, and He was maintaining that the stiffness and the hardness of the old wine skins, unyielding as they were, would cause them to crack and break because of the fermentation of the new wine. It must necessarily be placed in new and elastic skins.

The illustration is one that is readily understood, but it was a hard lesson for the traditionalists of His day and time to comprehend. Jesus ever reckoned with environing conditions and circumstances. He always showed a fine tolerance to those who, by reason of training or mental limitations, were unable to see clearly at once the great principles of life He came to enunciate. Repeatedly He rebuked his disciples because, in their zeal for what they conceived to be the inflexible and arbitrary rules of their religious system, they reckoned not with the limitations of those with whom they dealt. Obviously, Jesus laid down certain definite fundamental principles that were to regulate and govern His Kingdom. Such principles as the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man were not subject to the shifting changes of time or place.

One of the amazing things about His whole teaching is that it is so flexible in its adaptation that it applies with as much force to the Occident as to the Orient. He was in no sense like other great religious teachers, the leader of a race or the exponent of any insular system of ethics. The world's greatest thinkers and scholars have recognized the universality of His plan and system, and its amazing adaptability to all kinds and conditions of men the world over. Repeatedly, His followers, with a zeal that was "not according to knowledge," have sought to lay hard and fast limitations upon His teachings and to require that those who would become the adherents of His great faith should recognize and obey

one universal law and one universal practice. Much of the Church's great missionary endeavor has failed because of this fact. With misguided zeal we of this Western world have approached the older races of the East, demanding a punctilious regard for both the expression and practice of the faith. Again, we have sadly erred in seeking to restrict and restrain the exuberance and spontaneity of youth by forcing upon it certain hard and inflexible laws that rendered its reasonable and normal habits stale and unsatisfactory.

For the abundant life which He came to give, alas we have too often presented the circumscribed and restricted life. Hence, the new wine has burst the old wine skins and much of that splendid, exhilarating, youthful influence which the Church covets, and without which it loses its freshness, has been lost. There can be no question about it; Jesus recognized unfailingly the law of adaptation. He dealt in a kindly and gracious way with human conditions as He found them, and by a process of winsome love He restrained and reformed the erring. In this present plastic period it were well for those of us who are charged with the great responsibilities of propagating religion, if we gave greater heed to the divine method and practice.

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THE UNDYING FIRE

"HE SHALL baptize you with fire." This was part of the valedictory address of the great preacher who bore the rare distinction of being the "forerunner" of Christ. Retiring before the supreme messenger whose way he had come to prepare, he declared that where he

had baptized his disciples with water, the great Master would baptize them with fire. That John's disciples had been zealous in the new cause of which he was the acknowledged leader is self-evident, but mightier than John there was at hand, about to enter human life, a power so potential that all the world should come to feel its influence and acknowledge its supremacy. The fire kindled by the Sovereign Teacher from Nazareth has illuminated the world and while now and again in the course of human history it has seemed to lessen and decline, it has never been extinguished, and today men are recognizing its illuminating, refining and inspiring influence.

H. G. Wells, in his latest book, "The Undying Fire," has, as never before in his prolific writings, recognized the urgent and tragic need of this Christ-influence in all human concerns. True, Mr. Wells declares the supremely important place that education must occupy in an age of reconstruction, but it is not merely education that issues in culture that he clamors for, it is the deepening of the religious conviction that an undying fire burns in the hearts of men, if they will but recognize it, giving both light and energy for the great moral struggle in which mankind is engaged, as well as affording an assurance of ultimate and complete victory. In fine, the undying fire that is quenchless is the deep-rooted conviction that man is eternally and essentially related to God, and that in some poor and humble way he is cooperating, to the end that God's will and purpose may ultimately prevail.

Says Mr. Wells: "For four years now, the world has been marching deeper and deeper into tragedy. Our life grows more and more insecure. All human relationships have been strained, and behind the tragedy of war-

fare comes the gaunt and desolating face of universal famine, and behind famine, pestilence." Truly, he paints a gloomy and forbidding picture and yet the great publicists and economists hesitate to refute his chilling statements. One of the greatest authorities on financial and economic conditions whose weekly reports find a conspicuous place in every commercial house, in one of his recent letters to his clients says: "The need of the hour is not more legislation. The need of the hour is more religion. More religion is needed everywhere, from the halls of Congress at Washington to the factories, mines, fields and forests. It is one thing to talk about plans and policies, but a plan and policy without religious motives are like a watch without a spring or a body without the breath of life."

It was over a hundred years ago that Carlyle wrote: "A new splendor of God must come out of the heart of this industrial age." It was the reasoning of the canny Scotch philosopher in a period where the problems were far less complex and difficult of solution than they are today. Neither the high cost of living nor the adjustment of international difficulties through a league of nations will bring the world back to normal conditions. The sanctions of religion and the unfailing recognition of them underlie our very peace and security. It is growing increasingly clear that we must be visited with a new baptism of fire. Apathy and indifference to fundamental religious principles, disregard of the sanctity and sanctions of religion, a social life whose practice contravenes the mighty teachings of the Nazarene, and a flippant unconcern for moral and religious obligations have brought us perilously near the cataclysm which Mr. Wells describes. The call that is heard around the world is for a return to the ways of sane and wholesome piety.

RECLAMATION

"BREAK up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns." This was the call to a nation to make larger use of its opportunities and to use finer discretion in the choice of the soil in which to sow those large principles of life that produce ultimately the best and most enduring results. The implication contained in the admonition is, that the nation had been unmindful of the value of its ground and hence had failed in making the best use of it and, again, its sowing had been without discrimination or good judgment, with the result that thorns had destroyed its product.

Some one once said: "There are stops in our organ that we have never drawn, and that may contain our divinest harmonies." This is only another way of saying that some of the best things in life we fail to achieve because we misuse or fail to use the opportunities that lie nearest at hand. To know a thing is a distinct advantage, but to know how to use and get the largest results out of our knowledge is infinitely more important. The man who understands values has a large advantage, but the man who knows how to use and employ values is the man who ultimately comes to success. This has its wide application to our whole system of education. We are beginning to learn what the purpose of education is, and some day we may progress so far as to relate education to the practical needs of our system of living.

When the war broke out the nations engaged found that economy in the use of soil as well as of men was an indispensable thing, and we in America turned some of our fancy gardens as well as our unproductive fields to a new and more practical account. We talk now in the

terms of conservation. Even the misfits as well as the unfits are being carefully considered. We addressed recently what is known in the army as a "Development Battalion," which consisted of all kinds and types of men with all kinds and types of maladies and physical infirmities. What was the army doing with them? It was, by a selective process, fitting them for some form of service in some branch of our great enterprise. When we get back to normal living we shall have development schools in our towns and cities, and we doubt not we shall also have new systems and methods of development in our homes, schools and churches.

A fine dictum for our time is the word of the Master: "Let nothing be lost." All this has its application to the things of character. There is doubtless a way of making the crooked tree straight as well as of making the crooked life splendid and useful. Here, let us say, the finest Christian sympathy is demanded as well as the most infinite patience and the largest spirit of hopefulness. There is fallow ground all about us, unused soil, and a lot of this, through the greatest carelessness in the method of sowing, is unproductive. Sowing among thorns is a profitless thing. If the ground is to yield its full harvest, the thorns must be removed. The thorns in our human life are the vices and sins that are all too prolific. As we conceive our great task it is a work of reclamation and redemption; the reclamation and redemption of men and things is the big work that lies immediately ahead. We are going to make the world a fit place in which to live, but we shall make it fit only as we make it better, and we shall make it better through a finer and saner use of the materials with which we have to do.

A FRESH OUTLOOK

"I WILL arise and go to my Father." This was the final decision of a man who for years had lived in the far country of self-gratification and self-desire. It is part of the narrative taken from what has been called "the greatest story ever told." A modern writer sees in it the most comprehensive teaching that ever came from the lips of Christ, and another calls it the "evangel within the evangel."

Of course the central figure in the story is the loving and forgiving father, but there is something about this youth who had spent his all in riotous living, and who finally came to himself, resolving in the face of all difficulties and embarrassments to return to the father's house, that is altogether compelling and fascinating. By his own carelessness and forgetfulness of every reasonable restraint, it would seem that he had destroyed every avenue of approach to the home that he had dishonored, but in Christ's conception of the situation, there could be no such thing as permanent exile from the father's house. The only thing that was needed to get back to the normal habit of living was the will and the determination, coupled, of course, with true repentance.

In expressing the great mind and purpose of the father, Christ declared that, when the son was yet a great way off, his father saw him and ran and met him. There were no stern rebukes or painful admonitions; there was but one supreme expression of joy: "This my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found." This story is as modern as it is universally true. It is misnamed the story of the "Prodigal Son." It is the story of the Beneficent Father. There is not a man

or woman of us but has had far-country experiences. We get out of our natural and normal environment. Sometimes we do it through self-will, sometimes we do it through force of fortuitous circumstances. The whole question with us is: "Can we make the resolve to go back again to the Father's house?" To do this sometimes means breaking with environing conditions, customs, social conventions and a multitude of other things. It calls for courage and the exercise of the sovereignty of the will.

Robert Louis Stevenson is a fair example of what we mean. As a young man he rebelled against his Scotch household and the restraints of his father's house. Always physically weak, he grew worse in his life in Paris. But even physical weakness did not bring him back again, and he continued for years in a far country. He crossed this Continent in freight cars and was found apparently dying on the streets of San Francisco. Even then he had hardly come to himself, and it was only after he had reached the clear conviction that the Christian rule was the only rule of life worth following that he began to turn yearningly towards the old Scotch home and to long for the old fellowships. At length he said within himself: "I will arise and go to my father." It was a blessed reconciliation, and although the following years were tragic and full of frightful struggle against the inroads of disease, they were marked by a peace and satisfaction that has won the admiration of all men who have read the matchless writings of this great Scot. Thinking of Stevenson, we are reminded of one of the most beautifully conceived and finely expressed forms of resolution with which we are familiar, and it finds a fitting place in this little sermon.

"To be honest, to be kind—to earn a little and to

spend a little less; to make upon the whole a family happier for his presence; to renounce when that shall be necessary and not be embittered; to keep a few friends, but these without capitulation—above all, on the same grim condition, to keep friends with himself—here is a task for all that a man has of fortitude and delicacy."

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THE DISCIPLINE OF CHANGE

"MOAB hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel." The figure used by the prophet, Jeremiah, is taken from an industry familiar to the people of Moab, namely, the making of wine. The process of manufacture required that the juice of the grape should be strained and emptied from vessel to vessel for the purpose of removing the dregs or lees. Where this process was omitted, the wine settled on its lees, and in due time was contaminated and became sour. The implication of the passage is that a process of discipline accompanied by a reasonable amount of change is demanded for the best development of both individuals and peoples. Secure in her prosperity, Moab had become stagnant, and both her virility and strength were impaired.

This has application to all forms of life. Contrast the walled-in and insular life of China, with its centuries of unchanging conditions, with the varied and interesting life of Great Britain, marked by many vicissitudes and characterized by repeated changes. The first is a nation that witnesses to stagnation, the second is a people that witnesses to action and amazing advance.

Abundant illustrations of this are to be found on the page of history.

The changes in this present age are so great and follow so quickly one upon the other that they fairly bewilder us, and those who take counsel of their fears cry out, "Whither are we drifting?" We have witnessed in the life of our own nation this process of discipline through change. We have seen America literally poured out of the vessel of her own insular self-conceit and self-satisfaction into the new vessel formed and fashioned in France that represents sacrifice, great and incalculable. Who among us today regrets this pouring of the life of our people into this ampler vessel of service? We believe the process has refined, ennobled, and enriched us as a nation. We have come to see now more clearly that we needed this discipline. Other and perhaps more serious changes lie ahead and the process of purification must go on, but let us believe that, however great the changes and however unusual and strange the new vessels into which our life is to be poured, we are to come to higher stages of development in which our ideals are to be translated into new policies of service and into finer expressions of Christian brotherhood and fellowship. Those elements in our corporate life that have tended to sour and embitter us must be strained out, that the pure wine of our national life may be rendered wholesome and helpful.

This discipline of change has its application to the individual. Shakespeare said that "home-keeping youths have ever homely wits." We do not assume that this is a recommendation to unrestricted adventure or the wild pursuit of folly. It is clearly evident that the lads of our homes who were suddenly forced into a new and strange military environment have, through this process

of change, experienced the clarifying of their vision, the strengthening of their patriotism, and the truer realization of their idealism. It remains to be seen what this discipline of change in the lives of these youths is to produce in the coming days.

To some of us a crisis or catastrophe must come to arouse us from our dream of indolence, ease, and self-satisfaction. Even the Son of Man was "made perfect through suffering." His life was a varied, tried, and tested one. In Him, we witness the sublimest expression of self-sacrificing service. In Him, we find the supremest expression of a willingness to yield, even to the death upon the cross, that through this abnegation of Himself, He might lift humanity to a truer conception of the highest and holiest values of human service. As we face the future with its exacting disciplines, that must come through changed and changing conditions, let us take counsel of our hopes and not of our fears.

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THE SECRET OF GREATNESS

A YOUNG student who happened to be the guest of Phillips Brooks, was discovered by the great preacher studying the backs of the many books on the shelves of his library, and, in response to the preacher's query, "What are you trying to find?" answered, "I am seeking to discover the secret of your power." That secret was not to be found on the shelves of the preacher's library. It is true that a man is largely known by the books he reads, and that they exercise a potent influence in shaping and moulding his life. It is still more true that the secret of greatness or of power of

any kind is not so readily disclosed. Few great men have ever been able to make clear to their admirers the real secret of their strength and power. Macaulay claimed that he was intellectually reborn, almost in a night, by the reading of a single book. Other men of genius in various spheres of activity have discovered their latent qualities through contact with some great personality. It was Charles Kingsley who, when asked by an inquiring woman, "Tell me, what is the secret of your genius?" answered, "I had a friend."

Some men rise upon the horizon, the secret of whose greatness it is difficult to discover, because it has its genesis in things divine. It was such an one the anniversary of whose birth we recognized during the past week. There was little that was uncommon in either the environment or training of the great Washington. How or where he was fitted for leadership in the field or in the forum is not disclosed even by his best biographers. His genius as a leader seems to be revealed only as the occasion calls it forth. From the earliest day of his public service to his latest hour, he stands supremely forth as a man invested with almost supernatural gifts. It is little wonder that the greatest of English scholars and statesmen recognized in him a genius so incomparable that there was little with which to compare it in the long range of human history. One thing is conspicuous, and we believe it to be in part the secret of his extraordinary power. It was his unchallenged and unchallengeable integrity plus a purity of motive that proceeded from a heart and mind that were without bitterness, rivalry or cunning of any sort or kind. Verily it may be said of him that "his strength was as the strength of ten because his heart was pure."

As a Mason, he was loyal to the highest ideals for

which this honorable body stands. As an officer and servant of the church, he was a consistent and unfailing exemplar of its noblest principles and aims. Even the snows of Valley Forge afforded him an altar at which to worship, and from it he went forth to be the unconquerable leader of an ill-equipped army, and one of the creators of one of the greatest states the world has ever known. Like Lincoln, his religious faith was unrestricted by the precise forms of any religious body. Devout and chivalrous in his response to the high claims of religion, he lived a life that in its every aspect was unchallenged by friend and foe alike, and he set up and maintained an ideal of integrity and high-minded righteousness that has rarely if ever been excelled in this or any other land.

During these days much has been said concerning his ideals as they have to do with the things of the state and the relation of this government to those overseas. Repeatedly we have been reminded that to him "entangling alliances" were dangerous and fraught with gravest perils. Again and again we look back to his majestic figure as to the polar star of the Republic, and by it we seek to shape our present course. It were well at such a time, not only to regard with high reverence his noble character and simple ways, but it were far better to seek to reproduce in our age and generation some of those great qualities that made him a master of men. The call of our time is for righteous leadership in all the spheres of human action, and it is of little worth that we extol our Washingtons or our Lincolns unless we seek, with fine sincerity, to reproduce in the life of our day those qualities that made them great and immortal.

"LAUNCH OUT INTO THE DEEP"

THE above caption represents a word of admonition given by Jesus to His disciple, Simon Peter. The fisherman had evidently had poor luck, and he, with his partners, were washing the nets. Perhaps with some distrust they obeyed the Master's command, even though their night's toil had brought them nothing. The narrative tells us, that when they had let down their nets "They enclosed a great multitude of fishes, and they beckoned unto their partners that they should come and help them."

The word of direction and encouragement that Jesus gave is worthy of our deep consideration. Most of us keep to the shallow waters. Perhaps this is due to the fact that we are either unskilled or else fearful of venturing out beyond our depth. We all have in some degree the spirit of adventure, but very often either our fears or our doubts keep us from obeying our intuitions or what we call our better judgment, with the result that we all too frequently fail of large accomplishment. We remember a story that Dr. Grenfell told, which concerned a schooner wrecked on the Labrador reefs. She had encountered a gale and after reefing down her sails, her skipper had endeavored to make for the big, open sea. He knew full well that an on-shore breeze in a hard blow was dangerous, but he took the chance of clearing the reefs too late, with the result that he was caught on their ragged edges and his ship destroyed. Many a good ship has been lost in like manner, and may we not also say, many a human life has failed of accomplishment or of attaining its largest objective, because the skipper has been too conservative, has sailed

too close to the shore, and when the crisis came it was too late and he could not make the open sea.

This has large application to the things of our common, everyday life. We do not think that reckless daring is a thing to be desired. On the other hand, we do not think that extreme conservatism or fear are the elements in life that make for the largest success and the most secure results. The deep waters are almost always the safe waters. Better navigate where there is plenty of water than in a seemingly secure harbor whose restricted limitations afford no opportunity for either skill or large adventure. All this has its application to everything with which we have to do, but it has a very definite application to our religious faith. It would sometimes seem that most of us were disposed to seek what one might call a safe faith, a faith that calls for no large exercise of the imagination or of the will. The waters in which we navigate are largely determined by the limitations of our own particular cult; in fact, we seem to have little or no desire to know the foreign waters that lie beyond our creed-locked harbor, with the result that we become narrowed and restricted in our point of view, as well as insular in our fellowships and faith. "Launch out into the deep," is the Master's command to the church today. We can also hear Him saying to the troubled disciples when their little boat was threatened, "Why are ye so fearful, O ye of little faith?" The world is calling us today away from shallow things to the deeper things of life. Perhaps we shall be compelled, even against our wills, to launch out into the deep. Perhaps old, hoary systems that we thought were as impregnable and enduring as the rock of Gibraltar are to be shaken to their foundations. Perhaps, who knows, we shall have to revise and recast many of our old judg-

ments and systems, religious, social, industrial and political. If we have been drifting shoreward, riding near the threatening reefs, with an on-shore breeze carrying us on, it is high time we heard the clear call of the world's divine Pilot and its Master Fisherman. Of one thing we are sure, that the deeper waters call for greater skill, finer imagination, clearer vision, and unquestionably and always, a more splendid devotion.

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VALUE OF INCONSPICUOUS SERVICE

"JOHN did no miracle." These are the days of large things. Terms and values we hardly knew the meaning of a decade ago are now common in every day speech. Our fathers talked in terms of thousands. Until recently, we talked in terms of millions, but today we have taken a step forward and now talk in terms of billions. Business itself is using a new terminology and vast combinations in industry have, in part at least, displaced the smaller enterprises and eliminated competition. Even the League of Nations is a further expression of the same tendency.

We sometimes wonder whether there is not a disposition to render the worth of the individual less conspicuous and important. While the weight of over two million American youths, thrown into the scale of a world-war, rendered victory possible, let us not lose sight of the fact that it was the integrity and courage of the individual soldier, that in the last analysis, gave us the victory.

We cannot all be miracle workers; we cannot all be "top-liners"; we cannot all walk in the white light of

publicity, and it is well that this is so. Life would be an unlivable thing if all men were geniuses, for even genius has its peculiarities and weaknesses, and men like Carlyle, we have learned, are hard to live with. What we need to realize and learn just now is, that it is the man or woman who performs no miracles but who lives his or her life with fine consistency, high integrity, and an eye single to the common good, who is really worth while. We cannot get on without officers to lead us, but officers cannot get on without armies to answer their commands.

No one had a higher appreciation of the value of the individual than did Jesus of Nazareth. We have but to turn to the short narrative of His life to discover that almost all His great utterances were to individuals, and that they were spoken in the by-ways and on the highways where men and women toiled. It was said of Him, "He knew what was in man," and it was this Divine knowledge that made Him the incomparable Master of men.

His example needs to be reproduced in the life of the Church today. There are multitudes of men and women, both in and out of the Church, who have come to feel that they have no place of standing, because they can perform no miracle, either in the matter of service or that of giving. The very bigness of modern undertakings renders their service, to their way of thinking, both inconspicuous and valueless. This is a mistaken conception, and the time is at hand for the larger recognition of the value of humble and inconspicuous service. The Church, society and industry can only function through the "effectual working of every part."

We can only rise to a position of usefulness through the clear recognition of our responsibilities and obliga-

tions, and the discharge of them to the full extent of our ability. There is little use of our trying to work miracles when we can only do the commonplace thing, and what we need to emphasize today, is not so much the value of the unusual as the commonplace. We read of the Baptist that "John did no miracle." But this fact did not hinder him in being the way-preparer for the Miracle Worker. There is a mighty lesson in this for everyone of us, a lesson that has its application to every form of our individual and corporate life.

We have always liked that word, "Every man according to his ability."

* * *

THE MOTHER

IN AN age that is talking much of new methods and new schemes for the conduct of life, we find ourselves compelled to think more deeply of those older schemes and methods by and through which the race has been brought to its present state of development. Sometimes, as we read our magazines, it would almost seem as though the future were to be determined and the character of the people fixed through mechanical agencies, designed to work with mathematical accuracy. Again, we are told that we are to be regulated and controlled by committees, organizations, laws of Congress and acts of Parliament. To many of us it is becoming increasingly clear that there are certain divinely ordered plans that are as unchanging as the Pillars of Hercules, that are vital and fundamental to the security of the nation, the state, the home and the individual. We were brought up upon the maxim, "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world,"

and again we remember hearing another old-fashioned saying, "No man is greater than his mother."

Sometimes it seems to us that our age has forgotten some of these older aphorisms, and in our wild passion for change, we have sought for new methods by which to train the youth who ultimately must govern the land. Schools of all kinds, societies and committees of every name, may make their small contribution to the refinement and development of men and women. But when we get down to the root of the matter, it becomes increasingly clear that the most vital and important things of life, the things that determine character, are largely generated and made effective through the influence of the mother.

No one can think of great Lincoln without thinking of great Nancy Hanks. No one can understand the deep richness of the life of the two greatest prophets this country has known, Beecher and Brooks, without penetrating into the life of their homes and having revealed the human power that made them what they were, and that power resided in their mothers.

We are not undervaluing fathers in these observations, but when it comes to the moulding and shaping of characters, it is clear that God has given to the mother the rare genius of the sculptor. The world may make the man of affairs, the mother makes the man of character. The world may give its honors to the genius, the true mother inspires the genius whom it honors. The best poem Cowper ever wrote, so some think, was inspired on receiving his mother's portrait.

Years ago, we were visiting a man of great influence and power, when, picking up from the table a much worn book, he said to us, "Do you know what this is? This is my mother's Bible." There was a touch of tenderness

in his voice as he continued, "I am trying to read it through her eyes." Here was a man approaching old age, who, in his twilight period, was turning back again to the early days and living in the atmosphere of the one from whom he had received the finest qualities in his nature.

There passed away recently in this city an old-fashioned mother. She had been the wife of a clergyman whose unusual gifts had called him to many fields. She might have had as her family motto, "Here have we no continuing city." The shifting home scenes and the ever changing environments, coupled with the arduous and exacting duties that fell to her lot, did not and could not impair her sense of devotion to her household. Wherever her children were, was home. To our mind she typifies and illustrates that which is the supreme need of our present hour.

Let us not be hoodwinked in this age of reconstruction, by those modern and up-to-date conceptions of life that relegate to a place of unimportance the mother influence. No diviner task has God ever committed to His children than that which is given to the mother. The homeliness, as well as the homelikeness of those early scenes in the life of Jesus Christ, have furnished inspiration not only for the world's finest art and music, but the greatest hope and refreshment to the children of men. Jesus and Mary —what a theme for the poet, the painter, the musician and the preacher! Yes, what a theme and what a sublime example for every home throughout the world! A single sentence out of the brief narrative indicates the sublimity of Mary's love, "She kept all these things and treasured them in her heart." God give us, in this critical age, the kind of mothers whose gifted hearts and minds alone determine our peace and security.

THE BONDAGE OF FEAR

"ALL their lifetime subject to bondage through fear." Fear paralyzes initiative, impairs the will, renders ineffective life's service, and ultimately results in bitter disappointment and defeat.

Fear is one of the cruelest taskmasters that ever binds and shackles the human will. Probably most of the failures in life are traceable to the deadening influence of fear. The world's great pioneers, its map-makers, its empire builders, its great inventors and its finest philosophers have been those who were least affected by fear.

Just now we need in our lives as individuals and as a people that which dispels fear and inspires courage. The singular thing about fear is, that it is largely the creature of our imagination. We conjure up ghosts that have no real substance, and like Macbeth at the banquet, our distorted vision sees that which is solely the creature of our disordered minds. Again and again in the course of life when a crisis is past, we see the foolishness of our false expectations and the fallacy of our unreasoned speculations and misgivings.

How many of us today are filled with foreboding fears concerning the disasters that are to come to the world as the result of the war! Again, how many of us are seeing in the visions of the night, forms that terrify and rob us of our sleep! How many of us are carrying about a veritable Pandora's box tenanted with innumerable ills that seem to threaten to destroy us! If the physicians could break the seal of confidence imposed upon them, they might unfold a tale to us of our individual and community life that would startle us.

Christian people, who are supposed to know better and

to believe more than other folk, witness to the malevolent influence of fear. We remember that Horace Fletcher once wrote an admirable little book entitled, "Forethought versus Fearthought," and as we recall it, he disclosed the process by which he had, through sheer perseverance, overcome in himself the practice of anticipating, through an over-wrought imagination, the things that were untoward and forbidding.

The great explorer, Du Chaillu, had to literally discipline himself in the habit of looking hopefully and without fear to the strange and hazardous experiences that lay before him in his adventuresome life.

One of the things that makes the life of Jesus so persuasive and winsome, is the absence of all concern for self-comfort, self-satisfaction and self-preservation, and His utter and complete willingness to submit Himself readily and gladly to every task, regardless of consequences.

What is our Christian faith doing for us today? What is its actual value as disclosed in our everyday life? Do we really believe that "God's in His heaven," and that ultimately all will be well with the world? Do we really believe that "His purposes will ripen fast," and that presently we shall be the witnesses "of a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness?" Are we a Christian or a pagan nation? Sometimes it would almost seem that we believed that chance and not a just God rules in the affairs of men.

It was not so with the fathers of our republic. A Continental Congress went to its knees in prayer before it undertook to create a great state. A Washington knelt in the snows of Valley Forge before he went forth with his ragged troops to drive from these shores the hirelings of a despotic and arrogant foreign master.

We believe, come what may, that there is something more than might that ultimately determines the issues of men and of nations, and if we did not believe it, we should feel that life was utterly chaotic, without form and void.

Let us rise from the bondage of fear, let us break its shackles, let us not believe that right is

> "Forever on the scaffold,
> Wrong forever on the throne,"

but let us believe that we are federated with those divine forces that are irresistible and unconquerable.

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THE SAVING REMNANT

"EXCEPT the Lord of Hosts had left us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom." A brilliant modern writer has in one of his books a chapter under the suggestive title, "A Doctrine of Remnants," the design of which is, to indicate how large a place the small but saving remnants occupy in human society.

Few passages in any literature are more suggestive of this, than that which refers to Abraham and his prayer for the saving of the Cities of the Plain. Again and again in his appeal to God against their destruction he cries out for divine clemency, if peradventure there be found within the cities a small number of righteous men. At last, his search failing, he pleads for recognition of the saving remnant, and in response to his cry the answer comes from God that He will spare them if ten righteous men be found.

We need just now to have spoken to us a word of large reassurance, for the apostles of gloom and despair are abroad in the land. There seem to be more diagnosticians of human ills than there are maladies to cure, and the pessimists have largely come to dominate both our thought and action. In politics, in religion, in society, and in every sphere of life, we have those who believe, not only that the whole world is out of joint, but that it is utterly and hopelessly beyond repair.

With humility let us admit, that the sinfulness of man has effected results that stagger and bewilder us, but having admitted this, let us not believe that life is wholly and irretrievably bad. We have thought much of late of those lines:

> "There is so much good in the worst of us
> And so much bad in the best of us
> That it hardly behooves any of us
> To talk about the rest of us."

Here we are reminded of the classic illustration of Diogenes, seeking at high noon with lantern for an honest man, but fortunately Diogenes represents the eccentric and abnormal in life.

To illustrate the point of the saving remnant, we make the following citations: France, at the beginning of this war, seemed, at least to the superficial observer, to be near the breaking point. Witness this in the Caillaux trial, with all its offensive and repellant characteristics. Who would have believed that this France of July, 1914, was in the process of a vast and incomparable renovation of its life. It is a far cry from the France, even of Napoleon, to the France of the present, with its unconquered and unconquerable armies.

Witness it again in Great Britain that, by the testimony

of its own critics, had reached the dangerous stage of self-complacency, self-sufficiency, and the loss of much of its idealism before the first of August, 1914. What a change the years following have disclosed. Great Britain has never been greater, sounder, yes, or more religiously disposed, than in the present hour. She has been weighed in the balances and she has not been found wanting. The saving remnant in her life has made her supreme on the seas and invincible in the field. All this is the sure testimony, even of her severest critics.

Repeatedly, in our own national life we have seemed to come dangerously near the line that divides cosmos from chaos, but we have been most miraculously renewed and our national household secured against dissolution.

Already there are signs in this country that the sixth day of April, 1917, is to be regarded as the birthday of the nation's soul. Here on that memorable day we renounced our materialistic ideals, we forgot our pursuit of wealth, we abandoned our avowed purpose to be commercially supreme throughout the world, and we placed our standard as well as our men and resources beside those of the powers that were struggling for a reasonable and righteous world peace. It then became evident that there was a saving remnant in American life, and that the men who had hitherto been engrossed in the pursuit of dollars could and would, at the call of their Government, sacrifice all for a great spiritual ideal.

What is true of the body corporate is true of the individual. There resides in every nature, however hardened by circumstance or misfortune, a saving remnant of good. Let it once be recognized and empowered and the good outweighs the bad and the selfless and God-like become supreme. We need to realize this now as

never before. We need the encouragement that comes from the consciousness of the saving good in ourselves and in the world. If hate is to be displaced by love, if ignorance is to be over-ruled by clear-eyed intelligence, if war is to give way to permanent peace, if a better understanding is to rule the fireside, the workroom, the centers of society, commerce, and even the secret chambers of diplomacy, we must have a new birth of confidence in that saving remnant in human nature, that constitutes at once the source of its power and the mainspring of its hope.

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A CHANGED LIFE

"ONE thing I know; whereas I was blind, now I see." This is the statement of the man whom Christ healed. It was submitted in response to the persistent inquiries of those who sought to discredit the miracle and to embarrass the recipient of Christ's gift. A whole chapter in the New Testament is given over to the recital of this story, implying its large significance and importance. It contains the testimony of a man who, in the face of all contradictions, is conscious of a great change in his own life, and in the power of this consciousness is irresistible. It is a striking illustration of what repeatedly takes place all about us in lives that are transformed and transfigured by a power beyond man's comprehension. The late William James wrote an extraordinary book, entitled: "Some Varieties of Religious Experience," in which he sought to illustrate these amazing changes that are constantly being effected in the lives of men and women. Those who have been spiritually

and morally blind have suddenly become illuminated, and the whole course of their lives radically changed.

The term "conversion" is not as frequently heard or as popular as it once was, but it nevertheless describes an experience that thousands are day by day having and that in its far-reaching results defies all criticism, and persists in the face of all obstacles. Someone once said, "God sleeps in the stone, dreams in the animal and wakes in the man," and conversion might very properly be described as the awakening of the God-consciousness. Mr. Begbie, in a striking book entitled "Twice Born Men," submits evidences of this redemptive work that are utterly incontrovertible. We sometimes talk about the passing of the age of miracles, and men and women balk at the miraculous elements in the New Testament, but is there any miracle comparable to that which gives unfailing evidence of a changed and utterly transformed life? The man who was spiritually blind testifies, "Whereas I was blind, now I see," and every word and action of his life gives irrefutable testimony to the change. It has always seemed to us that the case of Saul's conversion and the complete turn-about of his life was a far greater miracle than that of the raising of the dead Lazarus.

The striking thing about conversion is, that it is accompanied with a power that is so remarkable and transforming that it frequently renders those who experience it almost supernatural in their gifts and talents. Again, it takes the very powers that have been exercised for selfish and unworthy ends, and uses them for the high purposes of ennobling and enriching mankind. In the case of Saul, the persecutor becomes the advocate, the man of a formal religious habit becomes the mighty protagonist of a faith that invades even the courts of the

Caesars. Again, it takes a man who is only fifty per cent efficient and renders him one hundred per cent efficient. Another strange and incontrovertible fact is that it is a continuing power, as was illustrated in the case of the great evangelist, Moody. Phillips Brooks once said, "The life of full completion haunts us all. We feel the thing we ought to be beating beneath the thing we are." To experience the character-making, life-renewing powers that flow from the very life of God Himself is man's highest privilege, as well as his supremest opportunity in this world. Whether the change is sudden and spectacular, or gradual and persistent, does not alter the fact that there is the God-like in all of us, if we will but recognize it and give it its opportunity for expression.

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MISTAKEN ZEAL

"THEY have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." The war overturned certain time-honored conceptions of government. The Romanoffs, Hapsburgs and Hohenzollerns incarnated certain conceptions or ideals. These ideals in men's minds changed, —exit czars and emperors. This same titanic struggle obliterated racial lines and annihilated distances so far as the world's peoples were concerned. It destroyed national insularity and did away with proud isolation. Great and dissimilar peoples suddenly coalesced under the compulsion of a threatening peril. Again, this great world struggle gave new meanings to old ideals or conceptions of human brotherhood; interpreted in a larger way the meaning of service; put a fresh and

more consistent value upon our obligations as keepers of our brothers, and established finer standards of judgment than we had hitherto known. In the sphere of religious enterprise, it made clearer than ever before the foolishness of divisions, the utter wickedness of clamorous contentions over non-essentials, unseated those who would build walls and partitions, and disparaged as unworthy of confidence and esteem those who clung tenaciously to party passwords.

A further study of war results discloses the actions and reactions, the consistencies and inconsistencies in the great workroom of industry, with all the resultant unrest, struggle, suspicion and needed readjustment. All of these are but the symptoms or manifestations of a world-wide malady that, for a generation or more has been in process of development. They constitute the inevitable results of a universal distemper that has affected every race and class of people the world over. Surely the time has arrived when we should begin to look for a return of sanity and fair judgment that will permit of the re-establishment of reasonable and normal conditions. On every hand it is becoming increasingly evident that religion must play its large part in re-establishing right human relations. Speaking of the present situation, Colonel Henry Watterson recently said, "Democracy is a side issue. If the world is to be saved after the war, it will be saved by Christianity, by Jesus Christ and Him crucified." It is interesting to note that all the great marshals who commanded in the field during the war were men of pronounced and fixed religious convictions. The Church at large is and must continue to be the interpreter and conserver of religion, and as we see it in the light of present conditions, it must reaffirm, if it is to be a factor in the present age, certain old and fundamental truths

or principles of living that it has largely forgotten or ignored.

One of the things that has become almost an obsession in our generation has been what we call "social righteousness." Sometimes it is called by the popular name, "social service." It would seem that we had reached the stage where we were all occupied and concerned about mass effects and mass results. We can only deal with groups, and we have become largely incapable of dealing with individuals. In this we have reversed the method of Jesus Christ. No one with any sanity would disparage the efforts after social righteousness or social service, but is it not time for us to once again make clear the primary and imperative need of individual righteousness? There are a good many people engaged in social betterment of one kind and another, who apparently have forgotten that righteousness, like charity, begins at home. We have employed all kinds of mechanisms and schemes to compel the interest of those who are indifferent to religion, and we are very properly rebuked by the word of the British soldier who, as he went over the top, said "It is all right to entertain me, but I want someone to tell me how to die," and he might have added, "and how to live." Donald Hankey made it evident that the inarticulate faith of the Tommy demanded something more clear and definite in the way of a program for individual and daily conduct. Before we shall begin to better our condition, social, industrial and political, we shall have to return to the old idea of individual righteousness and individual responsibility. Statesmen and those outside the Church are beginning to realize that we shall not satisfactorily rebuild our house until we come back again to a personal recognition of our personal responsibility to God and to man; in other words, until we begin to see

clearly again that, "except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it, and except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

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LOOKING BACKWARD

A BRILLIANT writer many years ago wrote an interesting volume under the above title, in which he sought to indicate how future generations would measure their advance by studying the seeming snail-like progress of preceding ages. When Edward Bellamy wrote his book he was not reckoning with such an age as that through which we are now passing. No prophet or statesman could have foreseen the tremendous developments which the world has witnessed in the past four years, and doubtless it would be quite as impossible for any living prophet or statesman to clearly forecast what is to be in the period that lies immediately ahead.

Too many of us measure our progress by looking backward, we register our gains by repeated reference to our yesterdays. It is a good thing to keep a diary, but it is not an over-helpful thing to live too much in its soiled pages. The old maxim that, "what has been must be," has arrested human progress, paralyzed enterprise and halted both science and invention. In his great work on science and religion, the late Andrew D. White indicates the dark periods of human history that were marked by bigotry and superstition, and that resulted in impeding both the thought and the action of some of the world's finest geniuses.

Happily, these days have long since passed, but it is well to be reminded just now that progress is determined,

not by harking back to the things of tradition or by noting over-closely what our forebears did. Someone once wrote an admirable article under the caption, "Progress Through Oblivion of the Things of the Past." It is well to be proud and loyal to the best things that have marked our advance, but it is unwise to feel that somehow the whole universe must be shackled to a hitching post. Too many of us are like David Harum's horse, "we stand without hitching," and we are too easily satisfied with the "let well enough alone" policy. Unfortunately, this is too frequently true of our youth. They study too much and follow too closely the lines of least resistance.

We are making history today by looking forward and not backward. It is wonderful when we come to study closely His life, how forward-looking Jesus of Nazareth was. Unlike all other religious teachers, He was ever seeking to project the world's vision into the new day and to compel it to recognize the opportunities of a hopeful and promising tomorrow. Even in dealing with the worst forms of human sin, He looked forward and not backward. If a vice had shackled and bound some weak and erring mortal and if condemnation for the sins of the past had closed the gateway to a better and triumphant future, He declared in hopeful words the pardon that broke the shackles and opened the door:—"Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more."

We shall not make progress by talking over-much of the "good old days" or by too frequent reference to the superlative qualities of those who have gone before. Just now this old world needs the strong tonic of a rational optimism and a reasonable hope. For a long time to come we shall talk over-much of what was "before the war" and it will hinder us in accomplishing what must be "after the war." We need in every department

of our life what President Wilson calls "forward-looking" men and women.

Christianity in its highest conception is essentially optimistic in tone. The Gospel is not a book of "Don'ts." We are not moving into a future over whose archway is the legend, "They leave all hope behind who enter here"; we believe we are entering a future that is to bring the whole race of mankind to saner and more Christian, and hence, higher levels of thinking and living.

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WAYFARERS

"A WAYFARING man in the street of the city." Someone has well said that the loneliest spot in the world is the crowded street of a great city. To the man or woman unrelated to its vast enterprise or its throbbing life, the city presents at once a problem and an opportunity. It is an unsolvable problem to him who lacks definiteness of objective and fixity of conviction, an opportunity to him who willingly and gladly fits into its life and becomes a contributor to its beneficent purposes.

A wayfarer is one who fares by the way, whose life aim and purpose is not clearly defined to his own consciousness, who lives from day to day without the sense of being a part of life's great scheme, whose thought is to satisfy his selfish appetites, who enjoys the vain and ephemeral life of the passing hour. True, there are those upon the city street who seem to be the victims of fortuitous circumstances, whose will power has been broken upon the hard wheel of fortune; but even these wayfarers if once their wills are re-enforced and their vision of

life's purpose made clear are capable of better things. Such wayfarers call for and demand our deepest sympathy and our unfailing help.

We are not thinking of these so much as that other kind, still more common, who lack both will and ambition and whose desultory habits lead them ultimately to failure and defeat. From the youth emerging from the classroom down through all the stages of life to old age, it is the desultory, carefree, selfishly indifferent ones who retard the wheels of progress, hinder all forms of beneficent enterprise and cumber the highways with the wrecks of mis-spent lives.

Too many of these wayfarers fail to get initiative and inspiration as well as clear direction in their homes and classrooms. They live without time-tables and their destinations are matters of supreme indifference. It is becoming increasingly clear today that the smallest or largest measure of success is attained alone by him who lives his life with a definite plan in view. It is not merely a question of square pegs in round holes, it is as well a question of strength of will, determination of purpose and definiteness of aim.

All this has its application in a large way to the cultivation of the things of character. We have been living in an age that has laid much stress upon so-called "breadth of view," but as John Mott has well said, what we need today is "length of view"—a penetrative vision. In other words, a wayfarer in the things of religion who rather rejoices in his "free-lance life" becomes ultimately indifferent to all religious convictions and immune to both its inspirations and impulses.

The wayfarer type is mighty common these days, and the church tramp, who for lack of conviction or willingness to co-operate with his fellows in a well conceived

system of moral and religious training, is a familiar object. It is this unhelping, uninspiring, purposeless type that makes no contribution to those agencies that are designed for the enrichment of life here and the promotion of life hereafter. Conceits and prejudices as well as selfish and self-seeking satisfactions have largely to do with generating these wayfaring impulses.

The Son of God, from His declaration as a child in the temple, "Know ye not that I must be about My Father's business," up to his latest hour when "He set His face to go up to Jerusalem" to meet crucifixion, lived a life with a supreme end in view, and today the world acclaims Him the Son of Man, its highest symbol of life, because He dared to follow His plan even though at the end of the way He saw a lonely cross. For present world living as well as future world assurance, we must abandon the wayfaring habit.

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IS THE CHURCH AFRAID?

ONE of the outstanding characteristics of the Old Testament is the heroism of its great teachers. There were statesmen-prophets in those days and they were not afraid of the face of man. They dealt with sin, individual and corporate, frankly and fairly, and while they did not render themselves more popular in so doing, they won a distinct place of leadership and power.

It is an interesting fact to note that many of the great religious leaders of the world have first been martyred and then canonized. Savonarola is an outstanding example. When he began his preaching in Florence, they

despised him, until at length, so powerful were his utterances and so forceful his denunciations, that he became for the while the master of the state. True, they ultimately burned him in the Piazza, but his name and fame have outlived that of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and no spot in Florence is more revered than that whereon he stood as a martyr. Some time ago a secular paper had an editorial entitled, "The Preacher for an Age of Sin," in which the writer clamored for a revival of the fearless and informed utterance of the prophet of old. One of the most popular American authors, Winston Churchill, in his book, "The Inside of the Cup," accuses the Church of cowardice in dealing with certain conspicuous and glaring modern social and industrial conditions.

We think he overdrew the picture and mis-stated the fact, when he declared that the Church is dominated by men of wealth. Our observation leads us to the conviction that the outstanding men in the pulpits of America today are declaring fearlessly and without favor their convictions, up to the limit of their knowledge. It is not so much a question of the Church being afraid, as it is of the Church being uninformed. Mr. Churchill is right in this. The Church must have an informed and convincing message on the mighty questions of the hour. Some one has said: "There is one way to reach the consciences of sinners in high places, and that is to quicken and give utterance to the social conscience. Just this is the prime function of the Church, the quickening and utterance of the conscience of society." Probably much of the failure of the church to effect this is due to its tendency to be "other-worldly." Jesus preached a Gospel for the present, and there can be no mistaking the fact that he dealt with human conditions as he found them and sought to better them. There can be no question

that the church must deal more fearlessly than it has with human ills, in whatever form they may disclose themselves. We do not believe, take it by and large, that it is afraid, although it may be timid. We do not believe that its ministry is chargeable with cowardice.

On the other hand, we do believe that clergy and people alike must be re-inspired by the fearless attitude of Jesus Christ. It was James Russell Lowell, I think, who said: "There is enough dynamite in the New Testament to destroy all our existing social institutions." And yet Jesus said: "I came not to destroy but to fulfill." It is obvious that he came to destroy that which was evil and to restore that which was good. His whole ministry was given over to bettering human conditions, and of Him it was said: "He went about doing good." There are glaring and conspicuous sins that go unrebuked, and sometimes it would almost seem that the people "love to have it so," but now is the time for plain speaking, and it is our unfailing conviction that the great mass of the people in and out of the churches are ready to hail with delight, either the prophet or the Christian layman who will, with high conscience, clear vision and unfailing courage, attack and seek to uproot the entrenched evils of the hour.

"Ye shall not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgment is God's."

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THE POWER OF A GREAT CONVICTION

WRITING of his own conviction concerning his mission, St. Paul declares: "This one thing I do," and then he indicates that it was, to rise in some measure, to the perfection of the character of his Master. What

a magnificent thing it is to see clearly the purpose of life, to realize its great objective, and then to commit all our energies and powers to its accomplishment! Admiral Togo, of the Japanese navy, wrote to his Emperor when he had determined as his unfailing purpose the destruction of the enemy's fleet: "After a thousand changing thoughts, one fixed purpose." Every man who has become a master of his profession or occupation has disclosed this power of a great conviction. He has seen the end from the beginning, and in the face of every hindrance and obstacle has pressed on. Blindness could not hinder John Milton's vision of Paradise, nor could Bedford jail restrain the mighty soul of Bunyan, nor could the hooting mobs deter the persevering and consecrated John Wesley. Lying on his back for weeks under the arches of the Sistine Chapel, Michael Angelo, with flaming genius, and unwearied brush, revealed to future generations his marvelous conceptions of truth and beauty. With but one purpose before him, Grant prosecuted his difficult tasks, where every other man had failed, until the climax came at Appomattox, and a divided nation was re-united and re-born. Disraeli, with a conception of his high purpose, declared to a jeering parliament that would not heed him: "You will not hear me now, but the time will come when you will hear me." The most perfect example of all this is to be found in the great Master of men, who, even in the face of the disciples' warning, "set his face to go up to Jerusalem." No cross can mark the failure of such a life. It is rather the witness to its complete fulfilment. He alone could say, even in the face of his persecutors, as He viewed a consummated salvation: "It is finished."

Purposeless living is nothing more nor less than gam-

bling with life. It is like "taking chances" or "playing with fate." Purposeful living is efficient living. It is reckoning not only with our capacities and abilities, but with the sure guidance and direction of Almighty God. What a miserable thing it is, to go to one's office day after day with no higher aim than to make a living. What a fascinating thing it is to go to one's task, however great or small, with the consciousness that it is part of a well-defined plan, that has as its end a fixed and definite purpose, and a purpose, be it said, that makes for happiness to others and satisfaction to ourselves. The great question we ask concerning the life of every student as he emerges from the classroom, is: "What will he do with it?" And no greater question ever confronts a man or woman than this one: "What is to be the purpose of my life?" Once determined, the whole course is prescribed, the machinery set in motion, and the object rendered clear. Some one says, "we are put here to grow a soul." This in itself is a great purpose, but in growing our own soul, let us see to it that every other soul about us is uplifted and ennobled.

AN EXPECTANT WORLD

"THE earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." The search for life's maximum is here expressed. From the dawn of history to the latest hour, the world has been waiting for the larger expression of the God-like in man. Doubtless each age has had its own standard and has fixed its own ideal of its super-man.

Frequently the maximum has been disclosed in some

human life that has sprung out of seemingly rank and common soil. The patents of royalty are not conferred by human hands and the purple and ermine are worn by those who do not live in king's houses. Neither wealth nor trappings of splendor are essential to the man or woman who comes carrying credentials divinely given. It was a great observer who said: "God writes a letter of credit on some men's faces which is honored wherever presented."

Subtract from the records of history the names of these God-gifted men and women who have come bearing their messages to humanity and we impoverish the world's galleries and libraries; we strike from its halls of learning and laboratories the achievements of their most gifted sons; we take from the fields of heroic action and the halls of debate those leaders that have stirred the imagination, aroused the enthusiasm, and fired with valor to heroic deeds their fellows. We have but to think of Milton, Bunyan and Burns in literature, of Wesley, Whitfield and Brooks in the realm of religion, of Washington and Lincoln in the inspired direction and control of a nation, to find examples of those who have fulfilled the supreme expectations of their fellows.

We are talking much to-day about the age that lies ahead. We are thinking in new terms of a world in which human relations shall be fairer, more equitable and just. We are hoping and praying that out of the storm that has devastated nations is to come an era when wars shall be no more. The whole world to-day is full of great expectations. To the unthinking and superficial these mighty changes are to come without sacrificing service, simply because they wish them to be. We may never dissociate ideals or high conceptions of

life from personality. Ideals and ideas are born into this world in men and women whom God Almighty has empowered.

The world's supreme need to-day is leadership, not leadership usurped, or conferred by human authority, but leadership that bears the hall-mark of a divine sanction. Let us not think that this new kind of leadership resides alone with those who bear the marks of greatness. The leadership of our time, and the only effective kind of leadership for such an age, is that which discloses itself in the average man or woman. As a matter of fact, the earnest expectation of our time is not for isolated examples of leadership, but for that commoner type that manifests itself in all the common relationships of life. To each man and woman comes the eloquent word of those who died that we might live:

> "To you from falling hands we throw the torch,
> Be yours to hold it high:
> If ye break faith with us who die,
> We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
> In Flanders' fields."

The man or woman today who is without the consciousness of responsibility in the new order and scheme of human life, is breaking faith with those who died in Flanders' fields. To live carelessly, thoughtlessly or selfishly at such a time as the present is to commit treason against one's fellows.

The old ideals have been displaced by the new, and the world is waiting to be re-born, and it will be the kind of a world that we make it, and its form and character will be determined solely by the kind of leadership we bring to it.

MORALITY OR RELIGION?

THE ancient Hebrew poet declared: "To him that disposeth his way aright shall be shown the salvation of God."

Matthew Arnold maintained that conduct is three-fourths of life. If this be true, there is a supreme need of some definite regulation of it. The world has tried many plans or systems. In an early day the great thinkers of Greece and Rome undertook to prepare certain rules and regulations for the government of human conduct in private and public life. One of the most faultless of these is known as the "Ethics of Marcus Aurelius," the great Stoic philosopher. We remember a man of marked ability who came to us once and, laying the above named book on our table, said: "I have tried to follow this as a sort of Bible, but I have reached the conclusion that it is inadequate: it is very beautiful but it has no heart element in it." We think he made a fine distinction between a human system and a divine plan.

Morality as a system, with all its splendid schemes for human conduct, has never effected a perfect society, although it has now and again developed men and women of rare qualities. Sometimes it seems to be difficult to distinguish between morality and religion. To quote Matthew Arnold again: "Religion is morality touched by emotion." In other words, it is morality with a heart element in it. We have sometimes thought that morality is a human standard of goodness set as an ideal of life, while religion is a divine standard of goodness plus the power to effect it. Again, we have conceived of morality as a finely conceived machine,

faultlessly constructed, but minus power, while religion is a principle of life plus energy. Morality is goodness through human agencies; religion is goodness through divine influence and assistance. Said Dr. Royce of Harvard: "Ethical teachings direct us to a better mode of life; religion undertakes to lead us to a home-land where we may witness, and, if we are successful, may share some supreme fulfilment of the purpose for which we live."

Religion may have many forms and be expressed through many voices, but it is coming more and more to be demonstrated that it is an indispensable requisite in our individual and corporate life. France in the heat of the French Revolution, by act of its Parliament, sought to abolish God, but a wise leader of the time said that if God were displaced today it would be necessary to invent a new God tomorrow, because of the demand of the people. The Jewish nation made a tremendous contribution to the world's betterment through its prophets and teachers. While Greece was living upon the fair stones of its philosophy, Israel was living upon the bread of its revealed religion. Greece has lost its place in the world, but the Jewish religion, in one form or another, has permeated the world's life and mightily influenced its civilization. Just now we need to be definitely advised that religion is the need of the hour.

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SELF-IDENTIFICATION

"WHOSE art thou? and whither goest thou?" When great issues are sharply defined and momentous concerns that have to do with the most vital things of human life are at stake, this clarion-like chal-

lenge rings out along the sentry lines that divide armies and parties from each other. In the ordinary habits of commonplace living we seem to find little occasion for defining to our own consciousness to what systems, organizations or principles we are committed. It is always easier to assume a middle-of-the-road course than to pursue definitely that which calls for deep thinking and possibly large sacrifice. The enthusiastic followers of a cause are not overnumerous and propagandists, while noisy and intense, are few in number. Today, however, new issues are coming to the fore and new principles are clamoring for recognition, and the demand is upon us to declare more definitely whose we are and what our tendencies.

In Bunyan's immortal allegory he speaks of "Mr. Ready-to-halt" and "Mr. Dare-notly" as illustrating certain clearly defined characteristics that all too frequently find their embodiment in personalities. These qualities are very largely matters of inheritance; we get, in part at least, our point of view from the environing influences of our early life. Today, this point of view demands re-examination, and we must determine, each one for himself, the ideals or principles which call for unfailing loyalty and service. In other words, we of America are required to stand definitely and loyally for those fundamental ideals upon which the very security of our national life is founded. To identify ourselves positively and, if need be, conspicuously, with those principles or institutions that are essentially American, and, hence, vital to our very existence, is imperative. There is no ground for the neutral or the indifferent today. We must either be for or against the principles that underlie and secure our very national being.

We, doubtless, need much house cleaning, and we

shall have it, but let this house cleaning be undertaken by those who are loyally devoted to our flag and nation. Let us be clear that no imported systems are to be accepted or tolerated in this hour of large readjustment. Let us further be admonished that loyalty to national ideals transcends loyalty to party organization. In our enthusiasm for participation in world politics and world commerce, let us remember that our first and foremost obligation is to our own land and people.

Theodore Roosevelt was right when he declared that there can be no such thing as "fifty-fifty loyalty."

The same may be said of our devotion to religious ideals. If the church has failed to function as it should or if so-called Christian people have given false interpretations of religion because of their un-Christian prosecution of self-interests, or their failure to emphasize the essential relation between faith and practice, it is high time they were reminded that here again a fifty-fifty loyalty to the ideals of religion, as those ideals are related to every human interest, is impossible.

We claim to be a Christian nation and the supreme court of the United States has confirmed this judgment. If this be so, let us prove it by our devotion to those principles enunciated by the Carpenter of Nazareth that are fundamental to the security of our homes, our institutions, our industries and our government.

* * *

RESTRICTED BOUNDARIES

"EDOM refused to give Israel passage through his borders." In the long and difficult pilgrimage from Egypt to the new Land of Promise, the children of Israel had come to the border of the little but self-con-

tained country of Edom. A request had been made upon the king of Edom to permit the Israelites to make a short cut through his country over the King's Highway, that would bring them directly to their objective. In applying for this privilege every safeguard was to be guaranteed and reparation made for any damage done. Promptly, the king of Edom refused permission and placed a guard upon his frontier, compelling the tired pilgrims to retrace their steps and by a long and circuitous course to reach the country whither they were bound.

Belgium refused Germany passage through its borders and valiantly held the vast army at bay and in doing so actually saved France from defeat and civilization from Teutonic dominance. On the other hand, America forced a passage into the borders of Cuba and the Philippine Islands, for beneficent purposes, and in doing so brought to their peoples the great elements of civilization.

The justification for this enforced crossing of the borders has been amply demonstrated. There is such a thing as a beneficent intrusion upon restricted territory, and we find ample illustrations of this in individual life. Many of us, by reason of narrow conceits or prejudices, limit our lives to certain fixed ideas or conceptions, with the result that we experience a mental poverty that ultimately becomes a hindrance and an embarrassment to us all along the way. Where we guard our boundaries with prejudices and bigotries, we lose much that is good, beneficent and stimulating, and thereby weaken and impoverish our lives.

This has striking application to those religious ideals that are ever pressing upon the borders of our life for recognition and acceptance. We refuse them admission because of a misconception as to their purpose or a mis-

interpretation of their design. The Man of Nazareth has stood persistently waiting for recognition through the long years; His aims and purposes have, perhaps, been misrepresented to our consciousness, through the narrowness or bigotry of those who essayed to be His interpreters; perhaps His Church with its varied forms and expressions of His life has seemed to us to be a useful but unnecessary agency. We have assumed an attitude either of incredulity or open opposition to His teachings. However persistently His demands may have been made or however beautiful and sublime His personality may have seemed, for one reason or another we have pursued our course, unheeding His claims and refusing both Him and His system of life free access through our borders.

Many of us recognizing this Master life upon our boundaries acknowledge its sublimity, confess the beauty of its teachings and perhaps recognize the value and validity of its institutions, but after all, it is only a border confession and penetrates no deeper. Someone has well said that the only test of the teachings of Jesus is, "to live His life." In other words, there can be no spiritual enrichment from superficial, border contact.

Holman Hunt, in a masterful way, portrayed Christ as "The Light of the World," standing at the door persistently knocking for admission. In this great painting, he makes graphically clear selfish indifference, resulting in definite refusal of the divine life. Today, this kingly life is once again asking for passage through the border. He is asking for admission into those large human concerns that have to do with the great issues of nations and peoples. Again, He is pleading for the recognition of His principles as they have to do with human happiness and the highest development of individual efficiency.

The large question confronting each one of us is not, "What think ye of Christ?" but, how far shall we give Him free and controlling access through the border and into the inner recesses of our thought and habit?

HELPING WITH THE LOAD

"BEAR ye one another's burdens." We recently noticed at the foot of one of our heavy grades a pair of splendid horses that were held in reserve for the purpose of rendering aid to other over-burdened teams as they attempted to climb the hill with their heavy loads. We were confident that if the teams thus assisted could speak, they would express their gratitude to the emergency horses that enabled them to haul their load successfully up the grade. Once the top was reached, the emergency team was detached only to repeat again and again throughout the long day the service of burden-bearing and load-lifting.

It suggested to our mind a lesson that every one of us must learn, if life is to be made more satisfying and efficient. The old idea of insularity or of individual and selfish satisfaction must give place to that of social responsibility. The average of us can pull our load along ways that are smooth and unhindered by embarrassing obstacles. It is only when we strike the up-grade, especially where it is rendered the more difficult by obstacles, that we need assistance to pull the load.

Our great nation recognized this when the cry came from overburdened armies, that they could not overcome the obstacles and difficulties imposed upon them by a selfish and imperious enemy. With gladness our lads

undertook the task, and what America did to carry the load is recognized with gratitude by her comrades overseas. We literally hitched our strong team to the load that was slipping back, and with freshness and enthusiasm we forced it ahead until the crest of the hill was passed.

Now we are facing the more difficult task of re-ordering and re-arranging the world's multitudinous and complex social and industrial conditions and we are reminded that if the greatly increased burden that now rests upon our nation is to be successfully carried, it demands co-operation and team-work all around. There is no room in this country today for the man or woman who believes in the old "go it alone" policy. For the time being, we are pausing at the foot of the up-grade and some of us seem to think we cannot or shall not make it, and we will not, unless we all pull until the peak of the burden-bearing is passed.

Up to the time we entered the war we were becoming more and more selfish and individualistic. We were saying: "May I not do what I will with mine own?" But now we are learning that we are "members one of another," and that, "no man liveth to himself." Everywhere, in all places and under all conditions, we must be load-lifters, burden-bearers, helping others and assisting them on the way until the up-hill grade is passed and the level road is reached. Those who want an extra team all the time in order that they may slip back in the collar and let the emergency team do all the work will not be considered.

After all, there is nothing so compensating in life as this great game of burden-bearing and load-carrying. We need to get the vision of the Scotch lassie whom Ian Maclaren described. Standing one day at the top of the hill

a Scotch minister saw a little girl toiling laboriously up the way bearing upon her back a heavy burden. As she came nearer, the minister saw she was carrying a baby boy, too large and heavy for her young shoulders. With indignation he said: "Lassie, isn't he too hivvy for ye?" Whereupon, without unbending from her load, but clasping more tightly the chubby hands beneath her chin, the Scotch maiden said: "Why, sir, he's na hivvy, he's ma brither."

Here is the secret of burden-bearing, the consciousness that the load we carry for another is the self-accepted load of a brother or sister on life's great highway.

* * *

REASONING TOGETHER

"COME now, and let us reason together." The Bible is a book which calls for conference, conciliation and the adjustment of differences. It has all too frequently been regarded as a book that emphasizes distinctions and classifications. The whole purpose of the Advent of Jesus Christ is stated in the words: "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."

It has taken us a long time to appreciate and practice in all our relations with each other the divine method. The world has been split up into parties, sects, classes and denominations, and the spirit of conference, conciliation, and adjustment has been foreign to most of our systems. The gathering together of twenty-five sovereign powers to sit about a peace table to discuss the federation of nations and to promote world peace is a fine example of the Christian method.

As with the individual, so with groups;—isolation and separation produce misunderstanding, friction, divorce of interests, and ultimately open enmity. We have been altogether too prone to accent the divisions that exist in our corporate life, notably in our vast industrial system, with the result that suspicions have been engendered, the spirit of envy has been created, and finally, an open breach made dangerously imminent. The war has demonstrated that what we termed Christian civilization, calls for and demands the real and not the sentimental recognition of the second great commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." All this implies the restoration of confidence and this can only come through vital fellowship and conference.

We believe the conscience of the world today is more sensitive than it has ever been before, and we further believe that Christianity as a rule of life is to disclose itself more evidently in all human relationships. It is doubtless important that men should meet together for corporate worship, but the trouble has been that the fellowship and spirit of the House of Worship have not been translated into deeds of service. It is of little use that we pray together unless we are prepared to confer and counsel together. It is of little use that we sing, "Blest be the tie that binds," unless we undertake in a practical and sane way to emphasize these bonds of fellowship in all our daily intercourse. Wise old Ben Franklin's aphorism, "We'll hang together or we'll hang separately," has its application to the exigencies of the present hour.

There will always be temperamental differences in the world as well as a wide variety of expression of these differences, but if Christianity is to mean something more to us than a once-a-week service, it must function in a

practical way in all the common week-day concerns of life. We of America have repeatedly shown our genius for getting together and acting together. The federation of States into a great union is illustrative of this. We may represent many old world strains and races, but notwithstanding this, we are the *United* States. To maintain this union and to do it fairly and equitably is the supreme demand of the present hour. Any individual or group, unwilling to reason through conference and interchange of views with their fellows, violates the very fundamental principles of our national being.

Suspicion, misunderstanding, unfair advantage, or unwillingness to promote and give the "square deal," are the evidences of our disloyalty, not only to the State, but to those Christian principles that underlie our security, our prosperity, and our permanence. We cannot live as hermits, we must live together in peace and amity; therefore, let us "reason together."

* * *

A SEARCHING QUESTION

"WHOM say the people that I am?" Every now and again we have great revivals of interest in certain outstanding world figures, men and women who, in one period or another, have filled the world's vision. Today as never before there is a universal endeavor to understand more clearly the "man in seamless robe" who stood at the judgment seat of the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate. It is safe to say that He is the most universally known and yet the most widely misunderstood figure in all history. Even as when He walked among men they misinterpreted Him, so again

and again have they failed to grasp the true significance of His marvelous life. That He yearned for a world that would understand Him and rightly measure His mighty life purpose is clearly evident. Here in our text He was seeking for some expression of the people's estimate of Him and His ministry.

Today this kingly figure has come again to fill our horizon, and a new interest more reverent and we believe far more intelligent than that which any other age has known is being disclosed.

It is a remarkable fact that almost all the great books on the "Life of Christ" have been written within the past half century. It is a more notable fact that the greatest of these was written by a Jew, namely, Edersheim. Renan, the brilliant Frenchman, found his chief delight, skeptic that he was, in writing his fascinating story of the "Life of Jesus." In the silences of St. Helena, Napoleon mused long and thought deeply of this Divine Man. Sometimes the church has obscured this kingly figure and placed it beyond the reach of men, by investing it with qualities and attributes that render it unintelligible and unapproachable.

The Christ that walked among men, that touched intimately their homely occupations, that sought out the lonely and obscure, that found equal opportunity for service at the gladsome marriage feast or as the great Comforter in the village where His friend Lazarus had died, is made to appear as so far removed from all our daily habits and tasks as to be entirely out of touch and sympathy with our common needs.

He sought the people, He lived with them, struggled for them, loved them with a deeper love than the world has ever known and to make this love more evident, He gladly died for them.

There is a pathetic cry heard today which discloses the failure, in part at least of some of us, His accredited teachers, to rightly interpret Him; it is, "Sirs, we would see Jesus."

"Back to Christ," this is the twentieth century slogan. He is the heart of Christianity, His life is its matchless example, His teachings its unfailing guide, His promises its security and its hope. Perhaps in our endeavor to make His church so utterly institutional, to equip it with all sorts of new mechanisms that are popular, we have put Him away from the vision of men.

Perhaps in our efforts after scholarship and our conceits of learning we have failed to make Him plain to the minds and hearts of men. Perhaps in our building of too ornate churches and our setting up of too elaborate systems of worship we have made Him unintelligible to the people. It is a time for serious thinking and new planning; it is a time in which the central fact of all our religious faith should be strongly accented. Christianity is built upon a personality; it is the expression of a life. True, we must have systems and organizations, but these must fail unless they reproduce in their devotees the mighty principles of living of which He is the supreme embodiment. Christianity is not merely the profession of a creed nor is it merely adherence to a system, it is the reproduction of a life.

It is men of His spirit to whom alone we may look at this time to point us the truer and better way that shall ultimately lead us on and up to new heights of power where brotherly kindness shall displace selfishness, greed and conflict.

* * *

THE LOGIC OF LIFE

"HE bringeth them to the haven where they would be." Never before as in the present hour have these words had so large a significance. After months of hard and trying service overseas, the boys are coming home to what they call "God's Own Country." If we of the home land have yearned for their return, they, in a strange country, experiencing the sterner hardships of army life, have felt a longing for the familiar scenes that is indescribable.

The break-up in the routine of life, the changed occupations, the unheralded and unknown future to which they went forth, and now the attempt to readjust life's relations, and to restore them to the place of efficient service, bring us face to face with the great question of life's purpose and end. We are witnessing today, as never before, the inevitable results that logically follow what may be called the "choice of destiny."

We have seen a great nation, whose place of distinction and power was the envy and admiration of the world, brought as a criminal to the bar of the world's judgment because it chose for itself the pursuit of selfish ambition, and in its vain endeavor for world domination came ultimately to that unenviable place which its own choice foredoomed. It is universally true, God brings nations and men to the haven of their own choosing.

What is true of the group is true of the individual, and while there may be exceptions here and there to the general rule, we are largely the architects of our own fortunes. All too frequently we charge an unseen hand with the control and direction of our lives, and we curse

our fate because in the game of life the odds seem to be against us.

It is perfectly clear that now and again fortuitous circumstances affect our plans, and our best intentions and designs miscarry. Napoleon thought this when the Alps intervened between him and victory, but he declared: "There shall be no Alps." Columbus thought this when, after weary days on a chartless sea with a mutinous crew, he seemed to fail of his objective, but undaunted he wrote persistently in his log: "Today we sailed westward."

The world is taking a fresh start today, and our returning boys remind us that they, too, are beginning over again, hence the importance of choosing aright life's objective; and it is well to remember in the choosing that occupation is a mighty factor in the shaping of character. If work means only self-satisfaction and self-gratification, it can but result in ultimate failure, no matter what its emoluments may be. On the other hand, to many a man or woman to whom the world has denied a "living wage" there has been given the opportunity for a service of incomparable and enduring value. We are bound to believe that the fairmindedness of this new age is to right injustices and correct inequities, but apart from all this let us remember that the choice we make in life's great scheme of things, if it is to bring us to a place of satisfaction and security, must be made with reference to that which it inevitably leads to, namely, a self-determined destiny.

All this has its peculiar application to what we call our moral or spiritual life. It is as certain as sunrise that "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." This has never been more demonstrably clear than now, and we have come to realize that if we sow a habit we reap

a character, and if we sow a character we reap a destiny. St. Paul clearly apprehended this when he declared: "Neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

There is a well defined logic in life, and we are, each one severally for himself, working it out. God brings nations and men to the haven of their own choosing.

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WHAT OF SUNDAY?

THE great teacher, Jesus of Nazareth, once declared: "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."

Repeatedly in his wonderful ministry, he seemed to show a lack of punctilious regard for the traditional practices and uses of the Hebrew Sabbath. He healed men on the Sabbath day and, to meet the needs of his disciples when they were hungry, he made provision by plucking the ears of corn.

Sunday has come to be universally regarded as a day of rest and recreation, and round the world the human machine is supposed to relax and recuperate one day in seven. Unfortunately in many modern industries this is not true, and we believe that some day the economic waste resulting from this violation of a great law will be made evident. There are more conflicting views as to what Sunday is designed for than about most other questions. To some, the day is one for physical relaxation and quiet; to others, it is a day for pleasure and entertainment; to some, unfortunately, it is a day for excesses of one kind and another, and to a certain very respectable number it is a day for worship and deeper thought, concerning the things that are vital to life.

Habits and practices from generation to generation change, and for a Puritanical Sunday that was cold and forbidding, our age has substituted a Sunday that is more like a holiday than a holy day. There doubtless have been extremes, and extremes that are out of harmony with the teaching of the world's great Master. We recall the New England blue laws that made it a misdemeanor for a man to kiss his wife on Sunday, and we also recall that in a middle western state one of the general laws provides a penalty for any one 14 years of age and upward who works at common labor on Sunday. We have sometimes wished the latter law were universally enforced.

No matter what our views may be about the uses of the day, it is made clearly evident that religion, real, vital religion, depends in no small measure upon this day and its reverent use for its propagation and permanence. Sunday and religion are indissolubly related. Again we say, Sunday and man's best interests are indissolubly related, and we doubt whether a man can enjoy a full, rich, well-rounded life, without a reasonable recognition of those high things for which Sunday stands. The Jew, Disraeli, once said: "Of all divine institutions the most divine is that which secures a day of rest for man. It is the cornerstone of civilization." This is unquestionably true, and as our civilization is based in no small part upon the things of religion, it behooves us to maintain at its highest standard of value that ideal of Sunday that recognizes the place of both rest and worship. A great Englishman said: "The observance of Sunday lies deep in the everlasting necessities of human nature." We believe this is the point that Jesus maintained when he said: "The Sabbath was made for man." It was made that he might have opportunity one day in seven for larger

self-development and for the disclosure to his own vision of the God element in life. It is strange that it is so difficult to be sane about this most important of matters.

A man past 70 years of age recently sent us the following suggestive verse:

A Sunday well spent
Brings a week of content,
And health for the toils of tomorrow.
But a Sunday profaned,
Whate'er may be gained,
Is a certain precursor of sorrow.

REVEILLE

HOW little we ever stop to reflect upon the wonderful plan by which God breaks our periods of activity into days bounded by sunrise and sunset. There is something about this arrangement that lends a peculiar zest to life and saves us from the disheartening influences of failure and disappointment. A day at a time, this is the divine order of life, and it is well that it is so. In the great camps, we have watched the tired men in brown as they returned from their long, hot marches and drills, and we have noted in their faces the evidences of fatigue and perhaps the sense of yearning for the things of home; but we have seen these same men turn out in the early morning, when "reveille" was sounded, with faces bright with the morning sun, refreshed and glad to take up again the hard and exacting tasks laid upon them. It was the call of the new day, made more splendid by the refreshment that comes with

restored and renewed bodies. All the disappointments and failures of the preceding day were forgotten, life was as new to them as "when the morning stars sang together." There is something that moves us to reflection in the glowing sunset, but there is something that stirs us to action in the golden morning. How the fevered patient tossing on his bed longs for the night to pass, how the watchman following his weary rounds looks to the east for the first signs of returning day, how the soldier standing through the exacting watches of the dark waits for the morning to come.

Reveille is the call to life and it is the call to service. We may go to our beds burdened with the consciousness of failure, but he is abnormal who wakes to a new day with a sense of liabilities too heavy to be borne. To one and all of us reveille sounds every day of life, and what does it mean? Does it mean new life and a larger service? Does the "brown taste" in our mouths remind us of the misspent hours of the preceding day? Are we carrying over into the new day the burdening failures or the enervating weaknesses or the body-destroying sins that repeatedly have caused us to stumble and fall in the days that are past? If so, let us try to change our so-called "habit of life." Let us try to get a bit of Stevenson's point-of-view that helped him to "climb the bare stairs of duty, inch by inch," and that, in the face of a fearful malady. We have known people who preferred to breakfast alone, because they felt so out of sorts with the world on rising that they could not, with any grace, even say "good morning". We submit that this is a sad and deplorable condition; such people ought to be confined to sanatoriums or homes for incurables.

Reveille means, not only new life, it is the call to a new service. We do not reckon with those undesirables

who have no service to perform and no consciousness of obligations to their fellows. We want to assume that any such are today inconspicuous, even as they are unworthy citizens of the state. There can be little doubt that the attitude with which we front the tasks and opportunities of each new day, predetermines our efficiency and our satisfaction in the things we do. If reveille called our boys to their weighty tasks each morning, shall not we who stood far removed from the great battlefront, learn to recognize its summons and go forth to do our part, that the life of the world in which we live may be better and more wholesome? The whole world today is hearing its new reveille, its larger call to a greater and nobler service for mankind. It is as if a new creation were at hand, as if a new civilization were being born. God is sounding His later reveille to the children of earth, this is what Julia Ward Howe had in mind in her majestic verse:

"He is sounding forth His trumpet that shall never call retreat,
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment seat;
O be swift my soul to answer Him, be jubilant my feet,
For God is marching on."

Are we ready as a people for the later call ? Are we prepared to forget the things that are behind and to reach forth unto the things that are before, in order that we may help to make the new day into which we are entering more splendid and its service more efficient and its results to the children of men, the world over, the more satisfying and equitable? Yes, it is reveille that is sounding, the new day is at hand, let there be no sluggards in the great camp, let there be no looking backward, no bitterness and hatred for what has been, but rather a larger, finer, sunnier outlook toward that which

is to be. The world is being called to higher thinking and nobler living.

* * *

TAPS

"THE night cometh." The last bugle note is sounding and all the lights in the great camp are extinguished, and the tired men in brown are at rest. So ends every day of life. Begun at reveille, it closes with "taps." Sleep that

"Knits up the raveled sleeve of care,"

is God's benediction to the tired sons of earth.

From the lisped prayer of the child, said at its mother's knee, to the petition of the tired man or woman, it's the day's last act, the closing of another page in the great drama of life. If we begin the day with new enthusiasm and freshened hope, how do we close it? If life is properly balanced and poised, if its occupations are good and its service fairly rendered, then its evening hours are filled with satisfaction and its hours of repose are made secure by refreshing sleep. The world at work is only made possible by the world at rest.

How little do we realize the value of repose, how little do we appraise that full third of all our life that God has ordained for man's restoration. Is there not something about the soft, gentle call of "taps" that stirs us to deep reflection? Do not the many voices of the day seem restrained and hushed, its varied and noisy occupations withdrawn, its applause or criticism silenced as the curtain of night falls? It is the hour of reflec-

tion, yes, and it is the hour of detachment and isolation. Men live together in the bright noonday, they live alone when "taps" is sounded.

It was a great poet who wrote of "Night thoughts," but no one may express for us the summed-up reflections of our day of life. Every one of us begins the day with addition and multiplication, but we end it with subtraction and division. What you or I may be, the new morning suggests, but what we actually are, the night declares.

All the pomp and ceremony, all the artificial and external things are seen in their true perspective whenever the world is withdrawn and its clamorous voices stilled. What do we see of our real self, our undisguised and actual self, when "taps" tells us the night has come? Is it a self that has expressed in no uncertain or obscure way the best, is it a self that in word or deed has lived a full-rounded, unimpaired day of life, useful to man and honorable to God? Has this we call self been a vehicle of blessing or only a receptacle that gathers of the world's gifts for self-consumption?

Viewed in the shadows of the night, when God's majesty discloses itself in the gemmed heavens, does this life of ours seem to our clear vision all that it ought to be? To answer such questions as these and to do it fairly, means to balance our books and to reveal the evidences of success or failure.

What does the tired soldier think of when "taps" is sounded? He thinks, however briefly, of all the action of the day, its tiring marches, its hard disciplines, its triumphs or its defeats—yes, and in this closing hour he thinks of home and loved ones, of faces that people his mind, of other days and fellowships. And what do these finer thoughts mean to him? If they mean anything

they mean the crowding out of the day's cares and trials; yes, and the crowding out of those baser things that in the unreflective and forgetful, make for misery, bitterness and pain. Blessed "taps"—that brings the hour of utter detachment, when we really tell ourselves who and what we are. When "taps" is sounded may we be able to say:

"I will lay me down in peace and take my rest, for thou Lord only makest me to dwell in safety."

* * *

CARRY ON

"NO man, having put his hand to the plough," said the Master, "and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." No man or leader ever so utterly and completely disesteemed the inconstant, the vacillating and the wavering as did Jesus Christ. He always dealt with life's positives and its affirmatives. There is something splendid about His unfailing perseverance in the face of all obstacles. We like the expression, "He set his face to go up to Jerusalem."

In all His dealings with men, especially with His disciples, He seeks to inspire them with a reasonable enthusiasm, a positive conviction, and an unwavering purpose. Of a doubting Thomas He makes an apostle of glorious power and martyr-like spirit. An impulsive and uncertain Simon He makes a Petros, a stone of adamant, impossible of dislodgment. He transforms the fanaticism and unreasoning zeal of Saul of Tarsus into the intelligent positiveness and heroic enthusiasm of Paul, the mighty apostle. What a magnificent evidence of this

we have when the brutal Nero attempts to silence this hero of the cross; from his prison he cries in triumphant tones, "I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," and the enthusiasm of his zeal stirs even the household of the voluptuous emperor.

Desultory and indifferent as many of our modern tendencies are, capricious and mercurial as the present age may be, the world at large has a deep and unfailing admiration for the man or woman, who, with stout perseverance and in the face of all difficulties, prosecutes with indomitable energy, some definite purpose. It is not the man with the hoe, but the man with the plough who challenges our attention and admiration.

Balzac once said, "Genius is intensity." Yes, it is intensity, plus determination and perseverance. "I will," is the word of power. "I can't," is the word of weakness and despair. It's some Field, making several ineffective and immensely costly attempts to lay his cable that two continents may be intimately related, who wins ultimately the world's applause and its lasting gratitude. It's some Webster working 36 years on his dictionary; some Edward Gibbon spending 20 years on his Roman history; some Robert Louis Stevenson struggling against physical infirmities to complete his work, that leaves behind a monument of enduring value and greatness.

The triumphant and irresistible slogan of the trenches was, "Carry On." A distinguished modern writer has said: "There are three kinds of people in the world; the wills, the won'ts, and the can'ts." We recall that Edward Irving wrote on the front page of his Greek Lexicon, "6 A. M. I, Edward Irving, promise by the grace of God to have mastered all the words in Alpha and Beta before 8 o'clock." He added later, "8 A. M. I, Edward Irving, by the grace of God have done it."

In no sphere of our life does the desultory tendency disclose itself more completely than in our religious habits and practices. We begin the life of faith with fine enthusiasm and splendid determination, only to find at length that we lack both conviction and perseverance. Our spiritual ploughshare rusts in the furrow, our hands grow weary, and we lose our zest.

How unlike the Master we are. He saw at the end of His way the cross; yes, He saw it from the beginning, but it never gave Him pause nor, indeed, did its shadow for an instant cause Him to hesitate. Men thought when they lifted Him up upon the tree and when they heard His last cry that they had closed His career. Had they? It had only begun, and from the cross His sceptered hands have come to rule the world.

To learn early in life the lesson He taught, means, even in the face of every obstacle, to equip oneself for every emergency or exigency, and to come at length at the end of the road, not to defeat, but to flaming and glorious success.

* * *

KILLED IN ACTION

"THEY counted not their lives dear unto themselves." "What did the field marshal die of?" asked a French colonel of one of his colleagues. "He died, sir, of having nothing to do." "Ah," responded the colonel, "that is enough to kill the best officer of us all." The vast majority of us do not suffer so much from inaction as from purposeless action. Few men are killed in action in our humdrum, commonplace, everyday

life, but many of us are seriously conscious of the fact that, so far as our usefulness in the world is concerned, we ought to be.

The saddest column in our daily papers is that which tells of the loss of our boys at the front, and yet there is something about the unrecorded valor of these boys, that gives us a thrill and inspires us with a new confidence in humankind. The noblest character Dickens ever portrayed was Sidney Carton, and let us remember the words with which he went to his death: "It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done. It is a far, far better rest that I go to, than I have ever known."

We reckon life by human standards, we appraise it by the measure we call success. Are we right in this? Judged by these standards the men and women who have made the largest contributions to life have been failures. Robert Burns and Oliver Goldsmith died in poverty, Victor Hugo was an exile from his beloved France for nearly twenty years, and Jesus Christ was despised and finally crucified by His own people.

The roll of those killed in action is a long one, and it is the most sacred annal the world contains. No one bids for martyrdom, and yet everyone knows that the finest and holiest enthusiasms of life are generated by those who die in action. No truer word has been written than that ancient one: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." The great periods of inspiration have been those when it cost something to be a Christian.

The weakness of twentieth century religion, as well as its curse, is its spirit of smugness and self-ease. Religious practice in our day is a kind of self-indulgence in a form of refined, aesthetic, somewhat intellectual and

eminently respectable Sunday entertainment; something that requires neither physical nor mental effort on our part, but rather a quiet, placid and oftentimes soporific occupation that society regards as one of the concomitants of good breeding. Heroic faith, the faith that is founded upon the eternal and unchanging principles of righteousness, that dares to live by its profession day by day, this is less conspicuous now than it once was.

What are we to gather from these heroes of the battle front? What is to accrue to American manhood and womanhood as the result of their supreme sacrifice? We say soberly and advisedly, no man is fit to live in this country as the beneficiary of those who died in action, unless he solemnly resolves that they shall not have died in vain. Lincoln's immortal words have a solemn message for this hour:

> "It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last, full measure of devotion."

Our love of country, our devotion to its highest ideals, our determination to live less selfishly, our finer recognition of those common ties that bind us in a great fellowship, to which each one of us must make his definite contribution, our hatred of those things in our industrial and social life that cause strife and division, all these and many more things that are just and fair, and true and righteous must we do, if these boys of ours, killed in action, are not to have died in vain.

America can no longer live its old, easy, independent, care-free life; it is costing too much. In the future we shall have to get away from our flabby, insular and

insolent habits, and play the game of life by new rules. If we do not, the finger of a just scorn and reproach will be pointed at us by those who were killed in action.

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A WORD FOR THE CLERGY

NOT long ago a popular writer, who happens to be a clergyman, wrote an article in which he told the story of his daily and weekly life. He was a man of a practical turn of mind, whose ministry has been finely helpful and whose reputation, through his books, is country-wide. What he laid down as the plan for the average clergyman's service was bewildering in its variety and complexity. A layman would hardly believe that the twentieth century parson touched as many phases of life as this program indicated. It was quite clear that the minster in question did not belong to a union that had as its standard an eight hour day, nor, indeed, that he was to enjoy a period of rest one day in seven.

We think the average layman grossly misconceives both the place and occupation of the average minister. Time was, when he preached two sermons a week, conducted a mid-week Bible-class, made a few visits in a perfunctory way, and then relaxed in his study that he might be edified by the close reading of many books. He had little or no contact with public matters; in other words, he had his "sphere" and it was a mighty limited and contracted one. To the mind of the layman he was an anaemic person, a sort of dehumanized mortal who lived in the upper airs and whose feet touched the earth rather reluctantly. He was a man who had no practical knowledge, who was out of touch with large human

concerns, and whose occupation was altogether "other-worldly."

What a change has come, and, be it said, what a change for the better! Of course a minister should be well informed, well instructed and well read; his profession requires a wide knowledge of men and things, but today he is (if he is a live man) touching every phase of life in the community in which he lives. If he is the right kind, he is making as many calls as an active physician. He is delivering as many sermons and lectures as the most occupied professor. He is as much of a consultant as a lawyer. He is as much of a social worker, dealing with a multitude of problems, as those engaged in settlement houses. He is as much of a citizen, with all the concerns of the city at heart, as the man in public office, and plus all this, he must be as much of a reader of the best in current literature and in the newspapers as the man of affairs. It is a vast mistake to think of a clergyman as being removed from common things or the common people. If he is so removed, he is a failure, and no one knows it better than he. We believe that no minister need apologize for being "all things to all men." The only clergyman who ought to apologize is the clergyman who is unrelated to the mighty human problems about him.

We make a plea for the saner recognition of this important office, for a kindlier criticism of its self-evident weaknesses. A friend of mine used to say that the reason why clergymen sometimes failed was because all of them were made out of laymen. Take the profession by and large, with all its opportunities for making mistakes, it averages up mighty well. If, instead of standing off from the parson, the layman would get next him and help him in the solution of his many prob-

lems, human society would be better, the church would preach a saner gospel, and many of our conspicuous ills in public and private life would be healed.

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GREAT BEGINNINGS

"IN THE beginning,—God." This is the first word in the Bible, and most appropriately so. It marks the opening passages that describe the creation of all things. No matter how the scholar or scientist may regard this amazing story, it stands unchallenged as one of the greatest things in the world's literature. In majestic order of sequence it tells of the vast movements of the Creator when the worlds were called into being and life began, but it was—"In the beginning,—God."

What is true as related here, is true of all the varying phases of human life and its experiences. Robert Louis Stevenson once said: "No man may say that he has made any success in art until he can write at the top of the page—'Enter God.'" What a difference such a conception as this makes in one's life! The trouble with most of us is, that we begin with ourselves. In the great count we are "number one," and we carry this practice into all our dealings. The boy begins with the maxim from the lips of his elders: "Always be number one," and with this conception he grows up to be selfish and self-centered. The young woman emerging upon the larger field of her action is admonished by her admiring parents: "Always try to be first." The motive behind these recommendations is usually a high one, but it gives a wrong outlook to life. The average man and woman starts each day with the thought that they are

supremely important and indispensable to the task in which they are engaged. Everywhere and in everything this conception of importance seems to obtain. Why not get a larger and finer conception of life than this? Why not begin each day with the thought, that all life springs from the great Father and that all inspiration and power proceed from Him? John Quincy Adams would not begin the day as President of the United States without a half hour in the presence of God. William Ewart Gladstone would not attempt to direct the great concerns of the British Empire until he had sought for and received inspiration from the All-Father. If we could only discover and disclose it, we would be amazed to find how many of the world's greatest men and women have found the inspiration of their genius in an unfailing practice of the presence of God.

Some one says: "It is a splendid thing to come to a new beginning," and so it is, but, on the other hand, what a dreadful thing it is to come to a new beginning without the consciousness of power, or to start from a new beginning without the consciousness of destiny. Our study, our work, our play, if they are to have behind them the driving power of a great conviction, must begin with a stronger and more vitalizing influence than that which self-consciousness gives. We have always liked that word recorded of a great prophet: "A man sent by God," the implication being that he carried to men in his very person the credentials of his divine commission. The men and women who are the bankrupts of the world carry no such self-evident and divinely given letter of credit.

The point we want to make is this: As life issued forth from a divine Creator, so it is conserved, preserved, inspired and stimulated by the daily consciousness of

His presence. We sometimes think He broke time into fragments of twenty-four hours each that He might give us daily the opportunity for a fresh start or a new beginning. Therefore we say with each sunrise, with each new task, with each new venture,—"In the beginning,—God."

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THE CROSS

WRITING to an early church, the Apostle Paul declared that, "The preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God."

Originally an instrument of torture and a badge of infamy and shame, the Cross has been lifted into a place of pre-eminence and distinction as the symbol of our salvation. Today thirty nations, provinces and cities use the Cross as a symbol upon their state and national standards, and in our own navy there is but one flag that ever flies above the national colors upon our men-of-war —it is the little flag with the white cross upon it that breaks from the maintop when divine service is held for Uncle Sam's sailors.

To those who have no apprehension of the significance of the Cross and its relation to their lives, it must seem as foolishness, but to those who recognize that it is the conspicuous symbol of the world's faith in Him who was crucified thereon, it stands for salvation and the triumph of character. After all, it is not some remote and far-away symbol, but an intimate and ever-present one. Said a German poet:

"The Cross on Golgotha can never save thy soul,
The Cross in thine own heart alone can make thee whole."

To the man or woman who has accepted this divine standard that witnesses at once to sacrifice and service, it means power, the imparted power of the world's Redeemer. Wherever we may go, in any part of the civilized, or, for that matter, the uncivilized world, there this holy symbol has its place. It is wrought into jeweled forms and, again, it is cast in iron as the badge of imperial honor. Round the world for the days of this week, in every language, there will be sung and said the mighty message that the Cross teaches. Again, mankind will bow in lowly reverence before the uplifted Christ, in fulfilment of His own spoken word: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

Has there ever been a time when the Cross has meant more to humanity than it does today? Before it, selfishness and self-interest give place to sacrifice and service. No man or woman who recognizes this divine symbol but must assume the obligations it implies. It is in the spirit of this masterful symbol of the faith, yes, it is in the presence of Him who is the highest approximation to mankind of all that is divine and holy, that we prostrate ourselves again, and with hearts rendered sensitive to its high claims, we rededicate ourselves to the service of the lowly Nazarene, and reconsecrate ourselves to an unselfish service to our fellows.

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IMMORTALITY

ONE of the earliest of the world's greatest writers asked the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" It is a question that has been asked by every age and by every people, and the only answer that has come with any degree of authority and finality was given by Him who declared: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

Thinkers and philosophers have sought by the most careful study of nature and the human mind to give an answer that would adequately meet man's hope of a future life. The heavens have been swept by the practiced eye of the seer and the astronomer, and the language of the stars has been interpreted by them, but they give no satisfying answer. The earth, with its storehouse of wonders, has been traversed from pole to pole in the vain search after that which would reveal, not only the character of its Divine Architect, but His eternal purposes concerning life beyond the grave. Guesses at truth are not truth, no matter how apparently accurate they may be. To assume the immortality of life does not establish it as a fact. All the reasoning of Plato and Aristotle and Socrates will not and cannot satisfy us. We may say with Addison: "It must be so; Plato, thou reasonest well, else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire, this longing after immortality?" It is a poor unsatisfying comfort that the great American orator gave, as he stood by the open grave of his brother: "From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead, there comes no word, but in the night of death hope sees a star and listening love can hear the rustle of an angel's wing."

The affirmation of Jesus Christ is the only word spoken with certainty. His whole ministry was an illumination of the theme of the resurrection. He came to revive the despairing yearnings of men. He came to lift man's vision to a loftier conception of life here and to touch it with the splendor of a life that should know no ending. The angels that guarded his empty tomb declared: "He is not here; He is risen as He said." Shall we not believe, as we stand by the sealed sepulchres of our loved ones, that once again the angels of the resurrection, His messengers to men, declare concerning our sacred dead: "They are not here; they are risen."

Mr. Blaine in closing a great utterance delivered before the Congress of the United States on the martyred Garfield, used these memorable words, as he described the dying sufferer: "Let us believe that in the silence of the receding world, he heard the great waves breaking on a farther shore and felt already upon his wasted brow the breath of the eternal morning." This is the sublime expression of man's hope, but we submit that today, perhaps as never before, in an age overshadowed by the sombre clouds of war, we need to hear anew the reassuring and inspiring message of the risen Christ: "Because I live, ye shall live also."

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THE SALT OF THE EARTH

"YE ARE the salt of the earth." Two words Christ used to describe the essential qualities of His followers, "salt" and "light." The men and women who accepted His principles were to be active agents in sweetening and preserving human society.

We are talking much today about what constitutes the essentials of civilization. Scholars and statesmen are seeking to re-establish human relationships upon a stabler and surer foundation than has hitherto existed. The ideals advanced by those who have attempted Utopian or Brook Farm communities have signally failed. Our economists have sought to effect well conceived systems or readjustments and for brief periods have met with moderate success. From the earliest times the problem has been not individual salvation, but the salvation of society as a whole. Matthew Arnold was nearer the heart of the matter when he asserted that conduct was three-fourths of life and that the value of any system was to be found in its effect upon human relationships. Today, again, we are driven back upon the fundamentals of life for direction in restoring a broken, disordered and distracted world. No one with half a wit believes that acts of Parliament or resolves of Congresses, however finely expressed, will restore the world's normal and healthy life. The Sermon on the Mount is in large part a declaration of what constitutes the security and happiness of human society. It is in itself a program for bettering human conditions. It is the word of one whose love for mankind has no parallel in the annals of men. Here in the text He was asserting that those who accept His teachings must disclose their discipleship in becoming vital factors in seasoning, sweetening and preserving the social conditions of life. Salt has a large and universal use. So valuable is it that the imposition of a tax upon it provoked a revolution in Rome. Homer speaks of it as "divine," and Plato calls it "a substance dear to the gods." As a matter of fact it is essential to life itself. Jesus used it as a figure to describe the essential qualities of the Christian. To season the life of the

world about us, to render it wholesome and acceptable is no small part of our task. Too frequently life becomes flat and stale. It loses its zest and its charm. Money will not render it more palatable, frequently it does the reverse. A life that has the seasoning quality of salt, whether its beneficent influence is exercised in the workroom, the office or the home, is a mighty factor in maintaining the happiness and contentment of men. Salt also sweetens, it dispels that which makes for bitterness and discontent. Lincoln's personality with its fine sweetening influence was more effective to this nation during the dark days of strife than all the combined wisdom of his cabinet and all the resources of the banks. Again and again he saved a critical situation through the exercise of that irrepressible quality in his nature that dispelled gloom and pessimism and provoked cheerfulness and hope. Sour Christians are impossible apostles of gloom; destroyers of cheer; wet blankets that extinguish even the sparks of good resolves; these are they who darken and embitter life. They shut up the Kingdom of Heaven, they neither go in themselves, nor do they suffer others who would to enter in. Just now we need a liberal supply of men and women who have in themselves the qualities of good, wholesome salt. Pessimism, foreboding fear, gloomy prognostications, these we have aplenty. The world is tobogganning down to perdition, and there is no hope,—from such false prophets, good Lord deliver us. Finally, salt preserves,—it arrests decay, it is life's indispensable. In the present scheme of things we supremely need men and women of this sort. We shall not make the world better by keeping within ourselves for home and personal consumption our Christian qualities. There are some mighty bad spots in our body social and corporate, but they will not be healed by

mere criticism and condemnation. To save is better than to destroy. There is a deal of ore worth saving in the rejected and neglected slag pile. Human refuse is a menace unless it is cleansed and rendered wholesome, but no "Holier-than-thou" method will do much to purify it. Our service must lead us to unattractive as well as to attractive endeavors. Jesus came to save that which was lost. So must we, but this means being as the salt of the earth.

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BROAD OR SUPERFICIAL?

THERE is a term much abused in our common speech today; everyone who holds so-called "liberal views" or who treats with inconsideraation the old and well recognized conventions of life, is called "broad." If a man is unorthodox, according to the old standards, he is essentially a "broad" man. If he winks at social practices that hitherto were regarded as dubious or questionable, he is "broad minded." If he looks upon the stage as the purveyor of all sorts and kinds of plays, legitimate and illegitimate, pure and impure, with a naive indifference, regarding these things as in some sense necessary, he is a "broad" man. Again, if he holds no particular religious faith to be necessary to a man's salvation, but hews to the dictum of the poet—

> "For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;
> His can't be wrong whose life is in the right,"

why, of course, he is a generously and consistently "broad-minded thinker." If the old, sacred usages and practices that have stood the test of generations, prac-

tices and habits of life upon which the fathers builded this nation more wisely than they knew, if these things interfere with the larger liberty of the individual or contravene in any wise the fullest and freest exercise of what he regards as his "personal rights," why, of course, they must be abandoned and relegated to the attic of forgetfulness.

We are disposed to believe the term, "broad," is being overworked, and another word synonymous with it, its true yoke fellow in strenuous service, is "liberal." Everyone who is strongly self-assertive, self-conceited or self-satisfied, is held to be "liberal." It would be a fair question to ask, especially with reference to the younger generation: "Whither are we drifting?"

Miss Repplier, in a magazine article, writes brilliantly and sanely on "The Repeal of Reticence," presenting another phase of the "broad-minded" endeavor to break down all conventions and restrictions and to make the property of common speech in school room, drawing room and church, those subjects that hitherto were regarded as of such a character as to find their best and truest expression within the narrower circle of the home. If we are all bent on being "broad" and "liberal" in politics, social habits, religion and the rearing of children, let us take heed lest our so-called breadth and liberality become not in due time the evidences of our utter superficiality. We are coming to the conviction that, according to the modern use of the terms, "broad," "liberal" and "superficial," they are practically synonymous.

All organized society, or to put it another way, all civilized society must, of necessity, be controlled by well conceived and well recognized conventions. A religious, social or political system that is unregulated is chaotic, and unworthy of the respect of thinking men and women.

Another aspect of this question is suggested by our duty to our neighbor; that is, if the second great Commandment still has binding force; possibly it too has ceased to be operative because it is too narrow. Whether I will or not, I am compelled to recognize certain definite and fixed rules or conventions of life that relate me to all those whose lives I touch.

A pretty safe rule to observe is, "None of us liveth to himself." If in our effort for a "liberal" or "broad" interpretation of life we infringe the rights of other people or disturb those well conceived conventions that make for wholesome habits and peace, we are simply violators of law and order, trespassers on the preserves of other folk.

All this that we have said has its application to so many things that it would be difficult to enumerate them. It is refreshing to meet now and again one who has fixed convictions, who has avoided the weather-vane method of judging the standards of life. It is almost a thrilling experience to meet one who is reasonably inflexible upon great fundamental principles. We believe that we are to come presently to a time that is to witness a recrudescence of the old gallantries and habits of refinement, the old and decent recognition of what we call the "sanctities of life," the sane and wholesome observance of man's relation to God and his obligations to his fellows.

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CONSISTENT JUDGMENT

WE ARE not so much the victims of environment as we are the creatures of opinion. The man with a will can combat and overcome obstacles that rise in his pathway to hinder and embarrass his progress, but some

of the strongest men fall impotent before the assaults of that subtle thing we call "public opinion." Men have been made or unmade, quite apart from any virtues or vices they had, by judgments, fair or unfair, that ultimately lifted them to supreme heights of power or drove them to depths of despair.

How few of us ever give serious heed to the judgments we pass upon men and things. With the barest information or knowledge, we swiftly commend or condemn, and few, if any of us, exercise this opinion-making power with either charity or Christian consistency. In his great poem, "The Bridge of Sighs," Thomas Hood describes one who, through the bitterness of human judgment, sought to shut out forever the harsh and stern criticisms that had embittered the very springs of life itself:

> "Mad from life's history,
> Glad to death's mystery,
> Swift to be hurled—
> Anywhere, anywhere,
> Out of the world."

He closed his great poem with an appeal for a larger sympathy and a finer charity for those who err. Many men and women walk the streets of the city, depressed and saddened, with a sense of utter despair, because a harsh and unrelenting human judgment has robbed them of hope and filled their skies with leaden clouds.

The habit of swift and ungenerous judgment fastens itself upon us, and unless we resist it, in due time it becomes an incurable malady. Most of us see things disproportionately or partially. He was right who wrote concerning man's judgment of God that which has like application to his judgment of his fellows:

"One part, one little part we dimly scan,
Through the dark medium of life's feverish dream,
Yet dare arraign the whole stupendous plan,
If but one little part incongruous seem."

We even permit our children to cultivate in the home the habit of criticism, based largely upon a formless judgment. Everywhere, in church, in club, in office, in society, and on the street, we live in an atmosphere of ungenerous opinions and false or partial judgments. Somehow, this seems to be peculiarly true in the present hour. If we could only learn to cultivate the habit of knowing the facts before we speak, how much less frequently we would express our hasty opinions and how much freer the world would be from the blighting and blasting influence of illformed and uninformed judgments.

"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."

Let us never forget that the most perfect life that was ever lived was condemned and nailed upon a cross, through a conspiracy of malign influences, the direct issue of the false judgment of selfish and unholy men. As a matter of fact, almost every disorder that has disturbed the world's tranquility and ushered in periods of unrest and grave disorder has had its genesis in this same cause.

The Christian Church has not been immune. Indeed, at times it has seemed to promote the spirit of criticism and harsh judgment. If this is an age of reconstruction, it were well for us to steel ourselves against this tendency, never more conspicuously present in the world than now. We are organizing many societies, but we supremely need one that will have as its motto text, "Thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest;

for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself."

One of the finest expressions of kindly judgment with which we are familiar was the late Dean Farrar's statement concerning the proposal to give Darwin a place of sepulture in Westminster Abbey. Said he: "I would rather take my chances with the great philosopher in the future than with those who would close the doors of the great Abbey to the mortal dust of England's greatest and most original thinker."

* * *

MISUNDERSTOOD

EVERY now and again we come across some disappointed and disillusioned human life that has been wrecked upon the rocks, indicated on life's navigation chart as "misunderstood." The average man or woman means to do right. Of course there are those who, for selfish or purely commercial purposes will sell their souls for a "mess of pottage." We are not thinking of them, but rather of that other large group, that in word and deed try to do what they believe to be right, and yet are victims of misinterpretation and misunderstanding. If we could reveal the skeleton that lurks in many a closet of many a home we would find it bearing the ominous label—"misunderstood." One of the tragic things about all this is the fact that those who either ignorantly or maliciously are guilty of misunderstanding their friends or neighbors, yes, their own immediate kinsfolk, are rarely willing or ready to undo the mischief their mistaken interpretation effects.

A wilful but generously impulsive boy in a household

is constantly the victim of misinterpretation or misrepresentation by those of his own fireside, until at length, driven by despair and discouragement he breaks away from all restraints, and plunges headlong into excesses of which he had never even dreamed; with the inevitable consequences—a shipwrecked life and a blasted career. If we could dig down beneath the bravado and callousness of some of the inmates of our penal institutions we would discover qualities of mind and heart that were fine and noble, but that had been vitiated and perverted through misunderstanding and ungenerous misinterpretation. Yes, and again, if we could get at the poisoned springs of many a domestic tragedy, of which unoffending little children are the saddened victims, we would find that like causes were the insidious and baleful germs that effected the final destruction of the home sanctuary. Perhaps—who can tell? behind the present awful world-struggle that is wrecking nations and undoing the work of generations of Christian civilization, resides this ghoulish spectre—misunderstood. What a situation confronts us! What a mighty cleavage separates the children of earth today! There is an aspect that this form and practice of wilful misunderstanding assumes that is both wicked and almost unpardonable. It is that habit indulged in by those whose intelligence should guarantee a fairer method, that discloses itself in accepting superficial impressions or unconfirmed reports and clothes them with all the evidences of genuineness and authenticity. Men and women have been burned at the stake upon such malicious misrepresentations. Scandal in its most malevolent forms has had its birth in minds diseased or perverted through long indulgence in this guilty practice. Now, as never before, there should be a vigorous crusade instituted against such as wilfully misjudge and misin-

terpret the words and deeds of their fellows. Sometimes in hours of pessimism we hear and heed the poet's lament:

> "Oh, the rarity
> Of Christian charity
> Under the sun,"

and we yearn for the ushering in of that day, long deferred, when reputations shall not be made or unmade by false judgments, nor the counterfeit pass current for the real.

It takes strength of character to undo a wrong or an injustice; it takes unchallenged manhood or womanhood to repair the breach; yes, it takes something of the quality of Him who hung on the tree, to recover the lost sheep, driven afield perhaps through our ungenerosity or misjudgment; but before the world shall again be made normal, these qualities must be re-established in the human heart.

* * *

AN INFORMED MINISTRY

IT WOULD be a sad thing for the Church if in this day of mighty changes it did not readjust and readapt its machinery to meet the new and unprecedented conditions. Some with limited vision seem to think that the Church as an institution is to play a smaller part in the new age that lies ahead. There are even a few who think that it will lose its place of power and distinction and ultimately pass away. Such a thing will never be so long as religion holds its sovereign place in the minds and hearts of men. The Frenchman was right; "man is in-

curably religious," and religion, whatever form of expression it may take, demands a channel for its transmission and interpretation.

Our concern is not for the permanence of the Church, but rather for its larger efficiency. There is an increasing demand for a ministry that is sympathetically in touch with the living issues and problems of the hour, and there are multitudes of sane laymen over the land who believe that, if the ministry is to function in any large way in the days that lie ahead, the curricula of the seminaries where ministers are trained must be vastly changed. It would sometimes seem that the training of ministers is designed solely to meet their own peculiar and professional demands and largely for their own personal satisfaction.

It is safe to say that, in the new testing days upon which we have entered, demands will be made upon the ministry such as it has never before known. After all, Paul's conception was the reasonable and sane one. He sought to be made all things to all men, and his power was in no small part due to the fact that he had lived his life as a tent-maker and knew not only man's spiritual aspirations, but as well the pressure of those deadening influences that tend to impair and destroy his spiritual vision.

A minister must be a diagnostician, and diagnosis is the result of intense personal observation and study. We have been getting too much from books and too little from human life and experience. The man of the street thinks of the minister as living in another world, whose concerns have to do with some "far off, divine event." We do not believe that spiritual realities and concerns are unrelated to present conditions and problems of life. On the contrary, we believe that most of our present

world problems must find their explanation and solution through a clarified spiritual vision.

Obviously, the Church can no longer hold the confidence of men, simply as the purveyor of a spiritual pabulum administered once a week. It must function in all human concerns, and to do this it must have a ministry that is intelligently and sympathetically informed, and this means more of the practical and less of the theoretical. It were well if every applicant for Holy Orders were compelled to take a three years' course in some business enterprise, and in lieu of this, that some of the studies now prescribed be omitted from his theological training. If the Master knew what was in men, it was because he walked with them, talked with them, and lived with them. He even followed the trade of an artisan, and it is this likeness to the common toiler that makes Him universally loved and reverenced.

There are doubtless men in business life today who, with their ripe and full experience, might become great prophets and teachers, exercising a ministry of incalculable power in and through the Christian Church. One such came to us recently, trained on the "ground floor," strengthened and enriched by his war experience, fitted in mind and heart to lift men to higher levels of thinking and living. Must such an one be compelled to begin anew a course of training, the very prosecution of which would hinder him in proclaiming the truth which he has consciously experienced?

The demand of a trained ministry, adapted to twentieth century life with its complex problems, is urgent and insistent. It was Paul the tent-maker, who became Paul the mighty Apostle. It was Jesus the carpenter who from His uplifted cross drew all men unto Him. It is the minister today who has lived in the midst of life's surging

problems, experienced something of its stern hardships, witnessed something of the seductive allurements of temptation, felt the enervating strain of pain and sorrow, plumbed the depths of human sin and its resultant suffering, who is best fitted to interpret to his time those eternal truths, upon which is builded man's hope of salvation here and hereafter.

* * *

THE GREAT QUEST

THE greatest search of the world is for the larger life.

> "'Tis life whereof our souls are scant,
> More life and fuller that we want."

This search for the larger life begins with the dawn of consicousness. The outstretched baby hands are feeling after the expanding life. The boy and girl in the school are studying that they may know life and have a larger appreciation of its values. The man or woman in the activities of the world is looking for the larger expansion of life and the greater fulfilment of its privileges and opportunities. It is a curious thing that people sometimes think that because Jesus is called the "Man of Sorrows," therefore he did not seek to bring to the world the richer and sweeter things of being. How often we misconceive religion in this way and think of it as something that is designed to overshadow rather than to illuminate life's pathway. How many young people begin with the notion that religion depresses and represses, that it is a "wet blanket" designed to hamper and embarrass them in the fulfilment of their joys and occupations.

As we have studied without bias or partiality the great writers of the world, we have observed that the really and truly great, one and all, seek to bring a contribution to the enrichment of the world. Only now and then we come across one, soured and embittered, who can see no good in life and who has no consciousness of obligation to add to its enrichment. It is a strange thing, but true, that men and women, no matter what their genius, who take this view of life, come to its close with a sense of failure and unmitigated disappointment.

A notable example of this is found in one of the greatest of Frenchmen, Amiel, whose only literary contribution, from a mind overflowing with wisdom, was his fragmentary "Journal," and of what does it speak? Disappointment, disillusionment, failure. With everything to encourage and inspire, with a mind of extraordinary brilliance, he misconceived life. On the other hand, there have been those with limited opportunities, perhaps poor in purse, like Robert Burns, born out of what the world esteems "rank soil," and yet they have brought to humanity mighty contributions to enrich and enlarge life.

None is greater in this respect than He who uttered the words: "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." It was not merely to fulfil, but to fill full, that He came. He saw in every man, unrealized, and oftentimes unrecognized capacities. He was poor, and wandered without a home, and yet He has done more to enrich the homes of men and to bless them with a larger vision than any other who has ever lived. Let us not misconceive His high purpose. His religion is the religion of the larger outlook, the fuller life, the richer joy, the more certain destiny.

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RECONSTRUCTION

RECONSTRUCTION is the word by which men conjure today. Recently we listened with amazement and admiration to one of America's great surgeons as he described the far-reaching changes in his field of service that were to follow the war. He spoke of the wonderful advance made in the treatment of human ills, and of the well nigh miraculous repairs effected where bodies had been bruised and broken on the battlefield. What he said presented one aspect of the program of reconstruction.

One of our captains of industry has recently declared that new standards of value are to be set up and that hereafter a man will be known and honored, not by what he has in the way of wealth, but what he gives of himself and of his means in the service of his fellows. Large corporations and industries that have hitherto been laws unto themselves are beginning to feel the new pressure, and what will be evolved as the result of all the new conceptions and theories of human relationships, no living prophet may venture to forecast. Already there is universally evident a new expression, to be followed by a new practice, of the old and hitherto misunderstood notions of human brotherhood. Human brotherhood has been a fine phrase that we have taken lightly on our lips and used more as a shibboleth than as a basic principle governing our relations to our fellows.

How many men and women there are in all the departments of our life who, during this war period, have literally found themselves in undertaking forms of service that heretofore they regarded as utterly alien to them? We were talking recently with a group of women

who were immersed in Red Cross work and we heard one of them thoughtfully say: "When the war is over and there is no more demand for this kind of work, what are we going to do? There is no doubt about it, now that we have become accustomed to this sort of thing, we shall have to find employment of some kind to satisfy our aspirations and our consciences." Yes, this is true, to lapse back into a condition of lethargic indifference or to become unresponsive (as we have all too frequently in the past) to the bitter cry of the children, or the pain and misery of the down-trodden and oppressed, seems unthinkable and impossible. The world's heart has been rendered sensitive by the world's tragic needs, and men and women of every class and kind have engaged in multifarious ways in a beneficent service that has literally made "the whole world kin."

We used to think of our obligations as limited and restricted to our own neighborhood; today we are thinking of them as having to do with peoples and races of every name, and a cry from suffering Armenia is as readily heard and answered as one from France or, indeed, as one from our own boys at the front. We have not only been learning something of geography and history and national developments; we have been learning the meaning of the universal language of the human heart, the language that requires no interpreter and no translator, but is understood of all men. The get-together spirit has spread round the world.

We wish we had the genius of prophecy at such a time as this, but with our limited vision shall we not say that human sympathies have been revitalized, and Christian theories have been translated into all forms of Christian service? Philanthropy has enlarged its horizons and broadened its scope; even the selfish corporation has re-

covered its soul and been taught, as never before, its responsibilities and obligations to its faithful servants. Insular religious corporations have been taking down their ecclesiastical walls, built largely out of their own conceits. The rich have ceased to patronize the poor, and the poor to regard with suspicion the rich. The divine right of kings has given way to the divine right of the people, and all around the world men and women are lifting their eyes to behold the new morning that shall usher in the redemption for which Jesus Christ lived and died.

Nothing has been more conspicuously evident during these years of suffering than the larger recognition of the place of the Man of Nazareth in all the concerns of man. He came to pluck the sting of death, but let us never forget He also came to give a new inspiration and interpretation to life. If "His pierced hand has lifted the gates of empires from their hinges and turned the streams of centuries from their courses," then, today, His pierced hand is opening wide the gates of a new life, through which the children of men are to pass, to learn the larger meaning of Christian comradeship, and to interpret to each other anew the high claims of selfless devotion to the common weal.

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"THE RELIGION OF THE INARTICULATE"

"THOU art not far from the kingdom of God." In one of the most striking books which the war produced, Donald Hankey's "Student in Arms," he has a suggestive chapter under the caption, "The Religion of the Inarticulate." His intimate contact with the men in

the trenches and in the field led him to the unfailing conviction that there were thousands of sincere and earnest men whose religious faith was clear and positive, but who, for one reason or another, had never accepted or formulated their belief in a specific creed. Again he discovered others who, for mental or other reasons, were either unable or unwilling to formulate their religious convictions in any form of words. It was Tennyson who once said that there are thoughts that lie "too deep for sound or form." It is unquestionably true that to great multitudes of men and women the traditional forms in which religion has been expressed are unsatisfactory, inadequate or meaningless. Much as we believe in the value of some definite form or expression of faith for the purposes of corporate worship, and also for the clearer expression of individual belief, we are bound to think that the day has gone by when a man may be charged with lack of religious conviction or faith because he can find no form of words in which to give it its largest expression. Obviously necessary as it is that there should be "modes of faith" for the larger conservation of the things of corporate worship, we are being forced to recognize today the unquestioned sincerity of those, who for one reason or another have never been able to articulate that which they believe. In the face of this, let us also say that we believe the time-honored creeds of Christendom are to continue to hold their place of great importance, and that the well-defined organization of the Christian Church is to continue on its way with probably greater efficiency in the days that are to come than ever before.

That Jesus recognized the validity of an inarticulate faith is repeatedly disclosed in his dealings with men and women. In the interview from which our text is

taken He was answering a rather critical scribe who had come to Him with the query, "Which is the first commandment of all?" In response to this Jesus had set forth in a simple way that which He regarded as the fundamental of religious faith, namely, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy strength" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The record says, "When Jesus saw that he answered discreetly He said unto him, Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God." The situation here presented is not an uncommon one. There are doubtless scores and scores of sincere men and women who modestly charge themselves with being unreligious because, forsooth, they do not subscribe to some particular party shibboleth, or because they are related to the public offices of religion in a purely nominal and inconspicuous way. We are bound to think that many such undervalue their Christian convictions or faith, or whatever they please to call it, because they subscribe to the religion of the inarticulate.

We hold no brief for those who believe that religion, either public or private, demands nothing of definiteness in its creeds or systems. On the other hand, we contend that there are probably multitudes of excellent men and women outside the pale of the Christian Church, who are there because they consistently believe that fellowship with the things of religion makes imperative subscription to and acceptance of its prescribed forms. We also profoundly believe that the loss of these people who are not far from the kingdom of God in their individual conceptions of religious faith or their exemplification thereof, is one of the greatest the Christian Church sustains. In the midst of the world-confusions and the wide variety of opinions as to what constitutes the essentials

of religion, the charity which Jesus exercised towards the questioning scribe needs to be widely recognized. There are unquestionably the great footing stones of religion that will not and cannot be dislodged. On the other hand, with fine generosity and a proper regard for the variety of minds with which the Church has to do, it were well that we manifested during these critical days an attitude of genuine kindliness and Christian courtesy towards those who hold the religion of the inarticulate. Of such shall we not say, "They are not far from the Kingdom of God"? To such shall we not open wide the gateway of the temple that in its broad charity recognizes goodness in every form and seeks to reveal to men the way that leadeth up to life eternal?

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IMAGINATION

"KEEP this forever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people and prepare their heart unto thee." This is a king's prayer for his people, for their continuance in a pure religious thought and habit. It is of peculiar interest to note how much the Bible as a book, emphasizes the heart element in religion—"As a man thinketh in his heart so is he"; "Out of the heart are the issues of life"; "With the heart man believeth." Scattered through Old and New Testaments the writers give peculiar distinction to the heart in the practice of the religious life. We commonly accept the heart as the seat of the emotions and of the affections, hence it is the inspiration of the imagination, and the imagination plays a conspicuous part in the religious thought and life of men and women the world over. It is curious again to note that the dominant religious systems of the world

have proceeded from the Orient, the land of imagination, and they have made the greatest headway with peoples whose lives were most responsive to those things that appeal to the heart. We have repeatedly heard men say that they could not accept a religious faith unless it made its appeal to their heads; in other words, what they sought was, to work out their religious faith through mental processes, very largely as some mathematical problem is worked out.

The man who eliminates the imagination and the heart element from his religious life has closed the avenues of approach to his soul and rendered religion an impossible thing. We remember that Frederick Robertson, the greatest preacher in England for over a century, declared that no amount of argument in the Christian pulpit, in his judgment, had ever conduced to the saving of a soul. I believe profoundly that my mind has come to co-operate with my heart and my imagination in my religious life, but I am quite clear in my conviction that my mind, apart from my heart and imagination, is utterly incapable of receiving the highest impressions of religion. Jesus Christ makes His appeal, there can be no question about it, to the heart and to the imagination. I can conceive of Him as the greatest figure in human history and my mind can accord Him the transcendent place as a religious teacher and philosopher. Among all the great founders and teachers of religion He stands pre-eminent. No one disputes this. Even the great German philosopher, Richter, declared that with His pierced hand He lifted the gates of empire from their hinges and turned the streams of centuries from their courses. But all this conception of Him will not make Renan, the brilliant Frenchman, accept the Man of Nazareth as his own personal Master and Saviour. It is the winsome person

of Christ, apart from all His teachings, the living Exemplar of the highest teachings that have been brought to men, the gentle, ministering, self-effacing Christ, that makes the irresistible appeal to our inmost consciousness. I may be bewildered by His teachings and confounded and confused by the miraculous element in His life, but all the processes of reason apart from the co-operation of the heart are ineffective to give Him place in the inner shrine of my soul and to make me cry out before Him, "My Lord and my God." After all, it is incomprehensible that the Divine should reduce himself to the compass of the human mind rather than to the limitless embrace of the human heart. You have been going on your way from year to year, saying to yourself: "Some day I will be able to understand all this teaching; some day I will be able to be a Christian disciple like other folk"; but I venture to say to you that, if that "some day" is to be determined by the mere conviction of your mind, when this Jesus of Nazareth shall lay His claim upon your purely intellectual life, it is improbable that you will ever be able to receive Him for what He claims Himself to be. The finest interpreter of the Master-life in the New Testament is the great-hearted John—different from all other recitals of this Master-life is his gospel. He did not seek to interpret to men the physical life of the Master, nor to give a synopsis of His daily tasks; he left this to other writers more capable than himself. What he sought to do was, to reveal to the human heart the divine Master of Men. It was this same Christ who declared that only they who became as little children could enter the Kingdom of heaven, and what did He mean? Was it not that the child was controlled by the imagination, with the heart the dominant factor in its life, loving, trusting, confident, unfailing?

FALSE RECKONING

THERE is a great tendency with us, especially at this critical time, to unduly overestimate our own importance in the large scheme of things. Occasionally the sudden death of some outstanding figure causes a temporary flurry with its accompanying short-lived panic, but we generally rise from these experiences with a larger consciousness of our folly and stupidity. No one is altogether indispensable; even a Von Hindenburg may prove but a colossal wooden image and his retirement but an incident of passing interest.

Luther's death did not hinder the progress of a vast reformation, nor did the assassin's bullet which slew a Lincoln halt or hinder the mighty plans of a reconstructed and reunited nation. No, our tendency to overvaluation of human agencies is altogether disproportionate. We recall that Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, on viewing the splendor of Trinity Church, Boston, "so all this depends upon a half inch of larynx in one man's throat." He was, of course, referring to the matchless genius of Phillips Brooks. But God does not leave His cause in the world without witnesses, and even the death of a Brooks does not restrict or retard the ever expanding kingdom of righteousness. The great prophet, Elijah, had experienced a severe defeat, a soulless king with his profligate queen had seemingly destroyed the efficiency of his work and dissipated the splendid influences of the church. It was while in a deep melancholy and a condition of depression that Elijah cried out: "I only am left, and they seek my life to take it away." The answer to this expression of too great self-reliance and self-importance was: "Yet I have left me seven thousand in

Israel, all the knees which have not bowed to Baal," and, with this stern reminder, God sent the disheartened, self-important prophet back to his tasks and to the great work of reconstruction. Elijah had simply overestimated his own importance—that was all. He had assumed that God's kingdom in the world could not go on without him, but he was utterly mistaken. Just now we need to be reminded of the fact, writ large in history, that

"Man proposes, but God disposes."

Out of our present world chaos we must believe that some larger, more God-like plan is to come. Man's part in the divine scheme of things is perfectly evident, but no man or nation, however great, is indispensable to the working out of God's plan. Humility is seemingly a lost virtue with us today, and at times we seem to think our little human scheme of things is all-important. It very frequently takes a catastrophe to bring us to our senses. We have one now; let us then with chastened pride recognize that we may be useful just in so far as we acknowledge that behind all the world's strange tragedies, behind its vast armies—yes, and its plan-makers—is One who can make even the "wrath of man to turn to His praise."

Let us of America approach our new tasks at home and abroad with the clear consciousness that we are great and invincible, only in so far as we fit into God's great and eternal purposes.

The assumed alliance of a kaiser with his tribal god, was an affront to the world's intelligence and a denial of its universal experience. Kings and czars and kaisers may depart, and all their miserable and unhallowed schemes may fail, but when they have played their little though tragic part, the order of the universe, like the

stars in their courses, will go on, and all the federated powers of darkness cannot hinder it.

We like well those splendid lines of Cowper—they have a peculiar fitness for the present hour:

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.
Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain."

* * *

"THE MAN WHO WAS"

RUDYARD KIPLING has a very fascinating and ingenious story under the above caption. It was near the Khyber Pass, and evening mess was served, when a shot rang out, and presently the sentry brought into the room a man, whom Kipling describes as resembling a "heap of rags." He was unkempt, disheveled, and utterly dazed. In answer to the questions put to him by the officers, he could give no coherent response. There was nothing about his person, and no word upon his lip that indicated his identity. When all inquiries seemed futile, suddenly his gaze rested upon a silver centerpiece that had for many years belonged to the officers' mess of the White Hussars, and reaching his trembling hand towards it, he touched a hidden and secret spring and disclosed the fact that in some distant day he had been related to the distinguished company. A further evidence of his lost identity was disclosed when the regimental

rolls were examined, and it was found that one Lieutenant Limmason had been lost to his command some 30 years before. With the return to the familiar things of the past, memory reasserted itself, and he was able to recognize himself and to recall the story of his early connections. In a word, the man who was, came back, and for a brief space he saw himself as one of the White Hussars, whose true life had long since ceased to be. He had literally been buried alive.

The story is suggestive, and is within the range of the possible. Fortunately, it does not fall to the lot of many men to pass through such a calamitous experience, but there is many a man of us who has come to years of mature life, who can hardly recognize in the present self the boy or the youth who was, in the days of aspiration and large expectations. Unfortunately, to many a man the world proves a hard, severe and exacting task-master. The ideals of early life are all too frequently blighted and seemingly destroyed by experiences that harden the sensibilities and dissipate the early dreams. Some natures are so sensitive that they cannot withstand or overcome those world forces that seek to break down and destroy the finer conceptions of life, its obligations, privileges and opportunities. Now and again we speak of a life as embittered, and all too frequently we treat such a life with too little consideration and respect. Experience has taught us that neither criticism nor condemnation is effective to restore such an one. On the other hand, we have repeatedly observed that the only reasonable process that sweetens and restores is one of gentleness, intelligent kindness and deep human sympathy.

One of the saddest phases of this lost self, all too common with us, is that which is disclosed in a life that has forgotten and renounced the early ideals of its re-

ligious faith. We sometimes wonder how many men there are in the world who, so far as their religious convictions and devotional habits are concerned, are but living witnesses to a lost and buried ideal. Every now and again in the course of our contacts, we meet such an individual, and it has been our experience that the revival of these early ideals is almost invariably effected through a return to certain early associations, environments or personalities, long since out of sight and almost lost to memory. Even a familiar tune or a hymn sung under the old roof-tree, or a long-lost photograph, or the return to familiar scenes, may suddenly destroy the later illusions and conceptions, break down the hardened and rebellious will, and bring the mind back again to a fresh expression and a new realization of forgotten hopes. Unfortunately the world at large, as it judges us, knows nothing of our antecedents, and we are rated good or bad, true or false, Christian or pagan, by what we seem to be today. The method of Jesus was far different. He appraised men for what they hoped to be, and repeatedly He revealed to their vision their forgotten selves. Recalling them to the high ideals of their better natures, He opened up before them new vistas of opportunity and hope.

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be," and it is this latent possibility that even in man's latest hour may restore him to the place which in the dreams and expectations of his youth he aspired to.

THREE THINGS

THERE come times when we feel a peculiar yearning for those things that speak of stability and permanence. The older we grow, the more we hark back to the things of early life that somehow or other seem to be the footing-stones upon which the whole fabric of our being is builded. This is marked in mature life by the tenacity with which we cling to old friendships, old associations, and the familiar places of our youth.

Every now and again we are rudely awakened from our self-ease and self-satisfaction by some influence or circumstance that seems to shake and almost uproot those things that constitute the very basis of our system of life. The present is doubtless such a time, and it were well for us to-day to have some freshening of our old enthusiasms and some real awakening of our old faiths and beliefs. It has been our observation, that affliction or misfortune tends either to establish and strengthen faith, or to seriously impair it.

As we look at the present world situation, three things commend themselves to our judgment as constituting the ground of our assurance and the inspiration of our expectations.

First, we believe that we must face the future hopefully. To many of us it would seem that we had entered a period in which the problems of life were more involved than ever before. To think that the days that lie ahead are to be increasingly hard, with much of shadow and little of sunshine must inevitably result in inefficiency for present tasks or incapacity to enjoy the benefits that must accrue to the stern experiences of the present hour. We are not advocating a sort of blind faith in "an ulti-

mate decency of things," but we are maintaining that hopelessness and despair spell out loss of confidence, loss of initiative, with consequent disappointment and failure.

Second, let us be ready to adjust ourselves to the exigencies of the hour. In a word, let us be ready and prepared to meet any changes that may come. This means to keep ourselves plastic and adaptable to changed and changing conditions. We once laid stress upon the value of fixity of thought and habit of life. To-day, however, fixity, whether in thought or practice, may spell ruin. We believe in fixity of thought and practice when it comes to those fundamental principles that are unchanged and unchanging; we are thinking rather of those modes or habits of expression that disclose themselves in our individual and corporate life and more particularly in our religious, social, political, and economic institutions. To believe that what has been must be, means limitation, paralysis, and the defeat of all enterprise.

Changes already are manifesting themselves, far-reaching changes, and we cannot but believe that they forecast an advance for all sorts and conditions of men.

Bigotry, bias and prejudice bind as with iron chains the thought and purpose of life. For centuries of time the conflict of science with theology and the conflict of class with class, where there was no charity and no arbitration, again and again brought nations and peoples, as well as communities and individuals, to the verge of despair and ruin.

Jesus Christ evidently believed in the law of adaptation, hence it is that His teachings have, almost unconsciously to the world, entered into its forms and habits of thought and action.

Finally, let us believe unfailingly and trustfully that, behind all the seeming chaos and present world happen-

ings, the divine hand is shaping and ordering a new world that is to excel everything that has gone before. The world, at present, seems like an orchestra that is tuning up, in which the sounds are discordant and confused, but presently a new world symphony is to begin in which every instrument is to play its part, in which every note is to have its fullest expression, and the Leader of this vast universal symphony is to be more evident and His will more dominant in the life of the world. We are unshaken in our faith, for we believe that, "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure."

* * *

UNPROFITABLE TALK

"SHOULD he reason with unprofitable talk? or with speeches wherewith he can do no good?" Most of us remember how in our youth our elders admonished us that we should "give an account of every foolish word we uttered," and perhaps some of us became reticent and overcautious and have continued so into mature life. If there is a record kept somewhere, that is to be revealed in the great future, of the foolish and unprofitable words we have uttered, some of us will have to reckon with an account that will overwhelm us.

Between reticence and volubility there is a safe and happy mean, and just now we need to find it. Perhaps few of us could enjoy the kind of an evening that Emerson and Carlyle spent at Craigenputtock on the memorable day when they foregathered and after a lapse of many hours retired without having exchanged a word.

It was with them communion of spirit and kinship of soul that counted.

Some of the world's most terrible tragedies have resulted from the practice of unreasonable and unreasoned talk. We are reminded that, for a long period preceding the Civil War in this country, men in the North and South talked in an injudicious way of an impending catastrophe, and long before the fratricidal strife came, the fires were generated by those who engaged in speeches wherewith they could do no good. For years before the recent war, all over Europe one would hear constantly discussed the possibility of a coming struggle, and at last speeches gave place to weapons and millions of lives were sacrificed.

Just now there is too much talk, as there has been for some years past, of the possibilities of strife between the several elements that make up our body corporate. An undue emphasis is being placed upon the insular rights and peculiar privileges of given parties or interests in our country. Of one thing we may be thankful, namely, that our part in the great war blotted out forever the sectional spirit between North and South, and so far as the lads in the service were concerned, they forgot allegiance to their particular States in their devotion to the ideals of the nation as a whole.

If experience teaches us anything, it enforces the truth of the text, that unprofitable talk is both unwise and unsafe. Instead of talking about the cleavage between class and class or section and section, let us form the habit of emphasizing the essential solidarity of the nation as a whole, and the essential unity of our common life. Let us talk more about America for Americans and the brotherhood of man, and make them something more than high-sounding phrases. Wars begin with in-

judicious talk, struggles begin with speeches that are calculated to do no good. It has been found repeatedly that, where much talk gives way to intimate conference and a fair exchange of views, adjustments reasonable and satisfactory are made.

All the foregoing has a very definite application to the things of the Church. Everyone of us has been unduly talkative about denominational superiority, and yet, behind all our talk we generally have one basis of faith. Supposing we do have our peculiar methods of administration and our conceptions of Christian usages, this does not hinder our emphasizing the fact that we are all human and fallible and subject to mistakes, nor again that we all have to live a common life with common virtues and vices, and that we all seek ultimately a common destiny.

All over America today, everywhere, in shop and home, in public and private, we need to apply the muzzle where our speech is unreasoned and unseasoned, and where it leads inevitably, not only to confusion, but to discord and disorder. We are not going to have strife and struggle if we keep our heads. We are not going to have breaches between classes or churches or organizations of any kind if sanity prevails and a Christian temper governs us.

We will doubtless have freedom of speech, but any expression of freedom of speech that contravenes justice, fair play, or the common good, is inimical to our interests and destructive of our happiness.

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* CHURCHLESS SUNDAYS

WHETHER we go to church or not, Sunday without the church or worship, is an anomaly. Can anyone, be he pagan or Christian, imagine what a churchless city or a churchless town would be? Perhaps it is well that we have had this recent experience, for it serves to emphasize in the consciousness of the community at large the essential place the church holds in its life.

Civilization is a complex and peculiar thing, and the forces that make civilization what it is all too frequently go unrecognized and unhonored. With most of us, life becomes too much a matter-of-fact thing, and altogether too many of us fail to consider that our civilization is what it is solely because of the great, time-honored agencies and institutions that constitute its safeguards. We recall that a distinguished labor leader said to us some time ago, "I do not go to church myself as frequently as I should, but I do send my wife and children, and I contribute to the cause. Perhaps there are many things about the church that make me feel it is unsympathetic, but, notwithstanding this, I recognize it is an essential and vitally important institution in the life of the world today."

The church may be criticized, condemned and pilloried, as it frequently is by the unthinking and ungenerous, and let us acknowledge that at times it is worthy of such criticism and would become offensively arrogant without it, but let the conscientious layman remember that the church, while divine in its conceptions of life and immortality, is administered by human beings, who, not-

* (*The churches were closed throughout the country on account of widespread influenza epidemic.*)

withstanding their sacred office, are susceptible to the weaknesses and mistakes of human nature.

Perhaps the closing of the churches for a brief space has given us time to reflect upon the place of supreme importance they occupy in maintaining a higher standard of thinking and a nobler habit of living. It is inconceivable that we shall ever have churchless cities or towns, and we also believe that it is likewise inconceivable that we shall ever have churchless Sundays because of the wish or will of the people.

No, the church as an institution constitutes a vitally essential part in the life of the home, of society, of industry, and of the state. History is replete with illustrations of the decline of great states where altars were neglected and the things of worship ignored. Our churchless Sundays have brought more acutely before us our needs as a people, and we have realized that even the illuminating (?) and informing Sunday newspaper is a poor substitute for the inspirations of religion.

While we are speaking about this whole matter it might be well for us to suggest, that now is the time for clergy and laity alike to look the facts concerning our religious life squarely in the face and to consider their relation to them. The church, obviously, is here to stay, and wars and rumors of wars cannot displace it.

This being so, what can be done to lift it to higher levels of efficiency, power and inspiration? We venture to submit that one of the most important things to be done is, to recognize that the church as an institution is successful and helpful only in-so-far as everyone who believes in it contributes his or her part. It is a mistaken notion, that the clergy are solely responsible for the church and that they alone make it what it is. Let it be emphatically said, the church in its finest concep-

tion is the whole body of the people, and it becomes a finer source of inspiration when all the people bring to it, as their contribution to its efficiency, not only their spirit of worship, but their devotion, their loyalty, and their unselfish service.

We are not going to have churchless Sundays nor churchless people. Any man with a vision today must maintain that the church as an institution is more needed now than ever before. A churchless Sunday is one thing, but a godless nation is a far more serious thing. May we be saved from both.

* * *

LIFE WITH A PURPOSE

ALL great men and women have been dominated by some supreme ideal or some lofty conception of the purpose of life; even the occult enters into this conception, as in the case of Napoleon, who unfailingly believed in the star of his destiny.

To many of us life is a purposeless thing, it begins seemingly nowhere and it ends nowhere. Again, the plan or scheme of things seems so chaotic to our vision that its time-tables, its regulations and its routes, are confused and confusing. Very frequently we are discovered by others, and a talent or genius that we least suspected is called into being. To discover a genius is greater than to discover a river of doubt. It is a great thing when a Lincoln discovers a Grant, or a Grant a Lincoln.

At this time of the year tens of thousands of youths are emerging from their schoolrooms, graduating into the larger field of human service and endeavor. We often

wonder, as we greet them, if they know where they are going or what they are going to do. Many of them seem to have absorbed the modern maxim: "We don't know where we are going, but let us get there as quickly as possible." To a more mature and reflective mind, life does seem to have some plan, and even its failures and disappointments constitute no small part in the outworking of a purpose that oftentimes is beyond our comprehension.

Jesus lived but three and thirty years; His whole life, judged by human standards, was one of disappointment, failure, and ultimate defeat. Condemned and pilloried by His own kinsmen, without honor in His own country, He was regarded by His contemporaries as a disturber of the peace, a destroyer of ancient customs, and an innovator whom they would not tolerate. To the churchmen of His day He was an intruder, whose insolence and interference they could not abide. Notwithstanding every obstacle, He set His face to go up to Jerusalem and to lay the plans of His kingdom, whose scope was universal and whose influence was not to be bounded by time or place. At the close of His career, while He stood under the shadow of a cross, He declared: "I have glorified Thee on the earth." It was His final testimony concerning the efficiency of His life's mission.

Only three years of comparatively obscure public life, and yet, by His own testimony, confirmed by the judgment of subsequent history, He had wrought out a system whose influence was to touch every land and to affect all forms of human life the world over. If Caesar Augustus could say, "I found Rome brick and left it marble," then Jesus could say, "I found human life without the consciousness of the divine and without the sense of destiny, and I have given it the realization of its God-

likeness, and I have filled it with the pulsings of eternity."

When Cecil Rhodes was dying, his latest words were, "So much to do, so little done." It was the expression of one who in the ripeness and fullness of years was conscious of unfulfillment. Not so Jesus. His was the realization of one who, even on the cross, could say concerning His life's task, "It is finished." Obviously, He realized that He was working solely and supremely in conformity with the divine will. "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me" was the inspiration of His life.

Does not much of our life's service miscarry because it is seemingly unrelated to God's infinite plan? The Westminster confession, in its opening sentence, is in consonance with the word of Christ: "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and enjoy Him forever." Mr. Elihu Root once said: "Life is not in length of days; to have done something that will last, to weave a thread into the fabric that shall endure for ages, that is life." The poet, Wadsworth, said:

> "There's not a man that lives
> Who has not known his God-like hours."

We believe this to be true, and because it is true it is a sad commentary upon so-called misspent and wasted lives.

To many of us, who are seeking at this time to disclose to our vision life's larger plan, there is found in the present world chaos the evidence of something that in its outworking is not fortuitous nor governed by chance. To be able to see, even in part, the scheme or plan of things, and then to fit ourselves to further it, means to ally ourselves with Him in whose hand are the issues of life. It's a great thing to be able to say: "I have glorified Thee on the earth."

* * *

CONFIDENCE

"CAST not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." Confidence is one of the basic elements of human life. It has its gamut from the cradle to the grave. It begins with the child in the home, enters vitally into his life in the maturing period in the school, and is the fundamental essential of his success in the period of his larger occupation with human affairs. Confidence begets confidence. The want of it destroys life's efficiency, the expression of it guarantees its success. No teacher has ever taught with power and efficiency who did not impart, as well as command this important element. No laggard in the class room was ever stimulated to greater effort and ultimate triumph by rebuke and persistent criticism, but many a lad has been restored to a place of power and effective service by the disclosure of confidence on the part of a reassuring teacher. An ounce of confidence is worth a pound of prohibition in the development of the boy—yes, and of the man. It is better to clean than to break the slate of the defective scholar. As we mature in life, this element of confidence becomes more precious to us. How many men would succeed in the commercial world today did they not have some assurance from those above them of the unfulfilled possibilities of life? I have always liked that phrase, "Man is not so much a fact as a possibility." In the big game of life it is the man, not only with genius but with the sense of assurance born of the support of those above him, who wins. Grant's efficiency was trebled by Lincoln's expressed confidence.

Underlying all industrial and commercial enterprise and guaranteeing its success and perpetuity, is con-

fidence. We have fallen upon a time that unfortunately seems to disclose a want of confidence, and want of confidence is the precursor of all panics. In 1907 the thing that caused the tremendous depression and resultant insolvency of many of our Eastern institutions was the withdrawal of confidence. It seems to be the popular thing today on the part of certain newspaper and magazine writers to decry the times and the men who make them, and to imply that in this great land of ours the whole industrial situation is on the verge of despair and ruin. There is a class of men in our legislatures, state and national, whose methods of self-exploitation pursue this dubious and fallacious course. They bid for a cheap notoriety, and seem to get it. They are self-constituted diagnosticians of their age, but unfortunately while they essay the role of diagnostician they have no reasonable or proper remedies for the situations they think they discover. I believe the time has gone by for this Diogenes type of muckraker, the man who is everlastingly pursuing his quest, seeking at broad noonday with lantern in hand for human defects. This great country of ours is not only self-contained, not only rich in its own abundant resources, but it has in it a working majority of its people, not only capable of higher things but effecting higher things in every phase of our corporate life. We need to be admonished that, if we are to endure socially, commercially or industrially as a nation, we must recognize the saving virtue and integrity that resides in the vast majority of our people.

Apply this principle to the great questions that relate to the adjustment of differences between capital and labor. It is want of confidence on both sides that precipitates most of our industrial disturbances and produces industrial disasters. I have been close enough to

the two parties in our great human workroom to know that where suspicion is engendered, inefficiency and ruin follow. It is universally true:—"A house divided against itself cannot stand." It would be well if we could all, as a people, go back to school to learn this one supremely important lesson, that happiness and peace, prosperity and right-living are born out of the consciousness of mutual interdependence, of mutual confidence. Through the setting up of false standards and the undue emphasis of class distinctions, and a growing suspicion between the various elements in our national and civic life, we have come repeatedly perilously near rupture and disorder. After all, the Divine remedy is the only one, the brotherhood of man is something more than a high-sounding phrase. It is the principle of life that underlies all permanence, peace and security.

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WASTE

THE Master of men believed in conservation. He not only believed in the conservation of material things but in the conservation of those things in our human nature that are worthy of our greatest concern. With his penetrating eye he saw the saving good in human life. What men sometimes call "the remnant of good," to Him constituted the vital spark that, once fanned into a flame, meant a life illuminated and saved. We as a people are having forced home upon our consciousness today the need of stopping the leaks or, in other words, the need of stopping the waste. Probably we are as prodigal as most people. It is perhaps our generosity, in part, that prompts us to be so. Again,

it may arise from the fact that we have had a superabundant supply of men and things, especially things. Suddenly we were arrested by the statement that manpower on the one hand and food resources on the other constitute the very sinews of war itself. We are being told today that that nation must endure that has the greatest supply of these essentials.

If these lessons that are so important can be brought home to the consciousness, especially of our growing youth, they will constitute one of the most valuable things that will come out of this war. We have often remarked, in traveling abroad, that the peoples of small countries, especially those who literally have to extract from the rather sterile and rocky soil of mountainous regions their limited products, disclose the greatest economy. Our acres are so broad, our land so productive, our resources so unmeasured, that we have fallen into the habit of careless and wasteful living. Let us here remark that almost inevitably, wasteful living leads to intemperate living, and intemperate living leads to moral and physical enervation and ultimately to destruction. Abundant citations from history might be submitted in demonstration of this.

We have never thought perhaps, that religion and conservation of the world's resources and supplies were intimately related, but they are. Indeed, we are learning at last that the great Teacher of men was intensely practical and that His life and its ministry were designed to deal with the most vital and immediate problems of human living, and that His supreme endeavor was to make this world a fit place in which to live, and so to make it, in a very real sense, the vestibule to a larger and more abundant world beyond. It has become now a matter of paramount importance that His point of view concern-

ing waste should be learned by every individual in the land, and indeed in the world. An overfull and overfed nation is doomed, because it witnesses to carelessness, prodigality and an un-Christian theory of living. The Christian church itself has not always been immune to the charge of wastefulness, but today, throughout the land, it must stand for conservation of men and resources as it has never done before. We have been reminded repeatedly of late, that they who waste anything at this critical time are enemies of the state and of society. Ought there not to be disclosed a practical demonstration of conservation in all the practices of our daily life, and ought there not to result therefrom, not only a more abundant supply of food for those who most sorely need it in the devastated countries over-seas, but a far better manhood and womanhood here in our own land. "Gather up the fragments that remain"—might well be one of the slogans of the hour, and in our gathering up of the fragments of material things, let us take heed that we gather up also those finer fragments that remain, even in lives that have hitherto witnessed to failure and defeat. There is a vast reserve remaining beneath the surface of the soil that only waits the hand of the toiler to uncover it. There are vast resources of good in human nature, covered up by rough and rude exteriors, that only await the sympathetic word of confidence and expectancy to reveal them in all their splendor and potentiality.

THE INDISPENSABLENESS OF RELIGION

THAT religion is an essential of life is universally true. From the untutored savage with his ideals of immortality as expressed in the "happy hunting grounds," from Darwin's Patagonian savage with his crude notions of God, down through all the stages of human life, the world over, we have expressions of man's yearning for the divine. The Psalmist cries out, "My soul is athirst for God," and this thirst is just as pronounced in the life of every age and people as it was when the King of Israel gave utterance to his yearning. Some one has well said that "life is a continuous adventure into the unknown." In other words, man is ever reaching up into the heights beyond him, seeking for some clear and fixed realization of God, and some definite experience that will make more evident to his consciousness his own relation to God. It is unquestionably true, as the Frenchman says, "Man is incurably religious," and however simple or grotesque or dignified the forms may be in which he casts his unfailing religious conviction, nevertheless they bring satisfaction to his soul and a serenity of mind that nothing else affords.

This need of the divine seems at times to suffer almost a complete paralysis. In one way or another and for one cause or another men will shut out of their lives, so far as they are able, the consciousness of the need of God, and from the many philosophies, systems or theories of life, they will seek to draw that which furnishes satisfaction and seeming peace. Again and again we have observed that only some strange happenings, some misfortune or disappointment seems to arouse the dormant spiritual nature and to give it expression. Na-

tions, like individuals, sustain these periods of soul-atrophy and seem for a time to be self-sufficient and self-confident and self-sustained. They have no need of God. They have no sense of insufficiency. In such periods the fires burn low upon the altar of sacrifice and the sense of devotion to high spiritual ideals becomes inactive, if not impotent.

Two evident purposes mark the ministry of Jesus, the one to make more clear to man his own sense of the need of God and to more clearly articulate this need, and the other to reveal to man more fully and completely the great heart of the Father and His eternal purposes and will concerning His children. With this revelation He also coupled a clear pronouncement of man's relation to his fellows. In His own amazing ministry He sought again and again to illustrate these profound truths. To questioning disciples, who thought only of things material, He said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of," and again, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me." He declared repeatedly that the real things that make for the more abundant life are the invisible and spiritual things, and without these life is impoverished and unsatisfied. We have fallen upon a time when spiritual ideals are being discussed as they have not been for a generation past. In camp and field, in home and office, men are seeking to make more real to their consciousness those things that withstand even the shock of war and the catastrophes of time. Every soldier that has returned from the trenches comes back fairly aglow with new conceptions of religion's worth, its utter sufficiency in the hour of need. Only recently we received from one of the leading military instructors in an American camp the statement, that the greatest need of the camp, as expressed by the men themselves, was a fresher

and clearer presentation of spiritual ideals. It is amazing that in the most material occupation in which men engage there comes the deeper yearning for the invisible and the intangible. Here it is that men come to realize the profound meaning of the words, "Man shall not live by bread alone." Whatever else this war may or may not produce, it has already effected a revival of profound and far-reaching religious interest. How this interest is to crystallize or what form it is to take, the coming days must disclose. Sadly and helplessly impoverished must he be who, in the midst of the world-storm, clings only to a material fabric that already is shaken to its deep foundations.

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ABDICATED PARENTHOOD

SOME time ago we heard a distinguished Jewish rabbi speak on the subject, "How shall we care for our boys and girls?" Among other things that he said, with which we enthusiastically agreed, was that the teaching of sex hygiene in public places, notably in our schools, was not only undesirable, but to him reprehensible. The large point that he made was, that all these modern practices, to relegate to teachers and disinterested parties those clearly defined obligations that are peculiarly parental, were the evidences of the Twentieth century tendency to parental abdication. He maintained with irresistible power the transcendent place of fatherhood and motherhood in the upbringing and character-making of the child.

There can be little doubt that one of the cardinal weaknesses of our time is the lowering of the standards

of home life through parental neglect and indifference. Probably nothing is disclosing this more completely than the critical war period through which we are now passing. Army life and the exigencies of the war test and tax character as nothing else has done. It is widely accepted that there is nothing more sacred than the obligation laid upon parenthood, nor is there an institution more sacred in its character and purpose than the home itself. Where there is no fine home influence and no sense of parental responsibility, verily, the people perish. Nothing is writ larger upon the page of history than this fact, that only those nations and peoples endure who first, last and always, conserve and protect the interests of the home. When we attempt to trace the greatness or the strength of the world's leaders back to its source, it inevitably leads us to the fireside and to the sterling qualities of some consecrated father or mother. In this connection, it is of more than passing interest to note that, many, if not most of the world's benefactors have sprung out of a home condition that was utterly simple, homely and in many instances impoverished, so far as worldly goods are concerned. Such homes with magnificent qualities of character in the home leaders, have proved training-grounds for men and women of surpassing richness of genius, and the world affectionately turns to them as the very sources of its inspiration and highest development.

The great question that challenges us today is, are we conserving and guarding these sacred influences that underlie and guarantee our national life and secure to us its best and finest gifts? Again and again we have been reminded of late that modern home conditions are not what they once were. The world is too much with us early and late, and the modern business man,

struggling to keep pace with the swift movements of his time, has become but a lodger, where once he was the strong head and defender of that which the Englishman calls his "castle."

We believe America is thinking more solemnly and seriously upon this great question now than it has ever done before.

* * *

FORWARD LOOKING

"WOULD to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan!" These are the words of an ancient general. They were spoken by him after he had met a signal defeat, which came as the result of disobedience to the known will of God. He and his hitherto victorious army were entering the Land of Promise, and they had had every assurance of realizing their highest hopes and expectations. The sudden check in their advance had caused a reaction and loss of enthusiasm, and a desire to return to old conditions.

The "primrose path of dalliance" is always easier than that of duty. Unfortunately we yield all too readily to the way of least resistance. This process begins in early life. It discloses itself in the choice by the student of the "easy courses." It is, "anything to get through," with as little effort and outlay of energy as possible. Again, it is a search for the "easy job" or the "soft place." We heard a man say recently, that he had always been looking for a job with little work and much pay, and at last he had found it. He seemed to flatter himself that he had discovered the sure road to success. How few of us are willing to undertake reforms either

in our individual or in our corporate life if they entail any sacrifice or inconvenience. One of the most dangerous policies in the world is the so-called "let well enough alone" policy. It is the policy of the sluggard and the drone. We have always liked that word, "He that putteth his hand to the plough and looketh back is not fit for the kingdom of God," and we would like to add, "nor for the kingdom of man."

This tendency of looking backward, to reflect upon old conditions, and this desire to return to ways of comfort and ease, have done more to retard the progress of the race than possibly any other thing we might name. "Would to God we had been content!" This is the expression that is universally heard. We seem to forget that it was discontent that forced the cave-man to seek for better conditions of living, and by slow stages has marked the upward movement of the race. True, it requires courage and reasonable self-assurance to make new advances. We have fallen upon a time when it is dangerous to look backward. Our forward advance today, like marriage, is "for better or worse, for richer or poorer," and it is inevitably true that, "he who hesitates is lost." Caesar crossed his Rubicon, even as Columbus sailed his uncharted seas, and as Grant stood stubbornly before Vicksburg.

The calls for a courageous advance along every line have never been more clamorous than they are today. The air itself seems to be vibrant with the enthusiasm of weighty issues and on every hand there are evidences that old theories and old institutions are in the crucible and presently to be remelted and recast. No prophet can foretell the events of a day. It is no time to cry out, "Would to God we had been content and had dwelt on the other side Jordan!" We are not urging an ad-

venturous and abandoned acquiescence to every new theory or sophistry of the hour, but we are enthusiastically advocating the need for forward-looking and for a determined advance in the direction of a new Land of Promise.

As this applies to our common, corporate life as a people, so it applies with peculiar force to the life of the Church. We cannot "rest on our oars;" we cannot ask for our yesterdays of a so-called "comfortable Gospel," whatever that may imply; we can no longer seek to be "carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease." The Church itself, and Christian people generally, must, after the manner of their Master, move forward courageously and enthusiastically to new fields of service and endeavor. Let us be dissatisfied, sanely dissatisfied, with our laissez faire religious habit. Let us be dissatisfied with our sentimental expressions of Christian unity, and substitute therefor something more vital and practical. Let us be dissatisfied with an "other-worldly" religion, and interpret to the anxious ear of mankind the Christ's religion, which was eminently present-worldly. In fine, let us, not yearn for the old conditions of ease and frigid respectability, but rather move forward across our new Jordan into the Land of Promise and larger fulfilment.

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JESUS CHRIST, THE WORKMAN

Is not this the carpenter?

THIS was the critical comment of the neighbors in Nazareth when their fellow-townsman, Jesus Christ, undertook to teach them in the place of public worship. The man who had plied his craft day by day

among them they could not and would not accept as their teacher. They had not yet learned that "the highest dignity of thought is consonant with the greatest humility of circumstance."

It was no mere accident that Jesus was a carpenter. Every Hebrew lad had to learn a trade, and it was in part for this that the Romans despised them as a people. Christ entered into the fullness of our life's experience. He passed over the same paths and through the same trials, that His sympathy might be coterminous with every phase of human life. We all understand the language of the toiler. There is a commonness about work that makes us all kin. We believe Jesus of Nazareth to have been a rugged, strong, virile toiler, in the great workroom of service. He stands as the simple peasant, the lowly workman, the world's Master, in the humble environment of Nazareth. Genius regards not the limitations of time or place.

The carpenter of Nazareth, by his whole teaching and life is appealing to our modern times for the recognition of the larger fellowship of our common human interest. The very selection by Christ of the role of workman, is suggestive of his desire to emphasize the intimacy that must ever exist between the high and the lowly, to make evident his recognition of a law wherein occupation can make no distinctions. It is a self-evident fact, that the large concerns of the world are with the people who work. Jesus Christ gave to labor a dignity and distinction it had never known before. He is the high exponent of the gospel of work. Let us always remember that work is not money-getting, it is world-bettering; it is not drudgery, it is discipline. Without it we rust. As oxygen to the lungs, so is work to character. Even salvation itself is not attained through some weak and lan-

guid and insipid kind of faith. Faith plus works, is the dictum of the Christ. The very fact that this age is peculiarly one of large commercial enterprise, makes it all the more imperative that a God who is a Son of Industry should rule and control it.

We believe that the carpenter of Nazareth is speaking to his world today as he has never before spoken to it. We need His sacred presence now in all the teeming marts of trade. We demand the practice of His precepts in all the great centers of industry. There is a crying need for the Workman of Nazareth in those places where the atmosphere of toil is heavy with the enervating miasma of greed and selfishness. Yes, we want, in a world that is tired and worn with competitions and strifes, the presence of this Master and Lover of men. If into the field of carnage and strife we pray for the advent of the Prince of Peace, then into that far wider field of action, strewn with the tired forms and exhausted figures of a vast army of men and women, who are struggling for the barest needs of subsistence, we need to pray for the return of that simple form whose lowly occupation relates Him to every concern of life. It is not some figure made remote by our Sunday worship of it. It is not some Christ of theology or creed; it is a living, acting, realized Master that the world is yearning for. A Workman, laboring with us where life is tense and its discipline hard, we supremely need now and must have, a Christ of the common people and hence of all people.

* * *

JESUS CHRIST THE TEACHER

A GREAT Chinese minister, Wu Ting-Fang, said, "I believe that Christianity is the highest form of religion that has ever been founded in this world." And Napoleon, in exile on St. Helena, repeatedly declared, that no teacher had arisen in the world's entire history comparable to Jesus Christ; said he, "He is great with a greatness that crushes me."

When His enemies sent officers to take Him, His speech was so powerful and irresistible, that they returned saying, "Never man spake like this man." What amazing authority we find in such passages as these: "I am the way, the truth and the life"—"I am the resurrection and the life"—"I am the light of the world"—"All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth." It is little wonder that Thomas Carlyle said concerning his messages: "Higher has the human thought not reached."

One of the amazing things about his teaching is its universality, and its marvelous application to all the varying conditions of human life. All the other great religious teachers of the world have spoken to restricted areas. They have been what we call ethnic or racial religious teachers. Not so Jesus. He speaks to the world and to all time. There is as much freshness about His utterance today as when it was spoken. He is distinctly a modernist, and the singular part of it all is, that he persists as such. Speaking from such lofty heights, He nevertheless reaches the humblest minds. His word is as clear to the consciousness of the peasant as it is to that of the prince; it is as luminous to the opening mind of the child as it is to the trained mind of the scholar.

One of the things, we believe, that makes Jesus the Teacher so universally loved is the authority with which He speaks. The divine magnetism of His voice has literally drawn the world to Him. Other great teachers have left us rich and wonderful expressions of truth, as they apprehended it, but none of them draws us with such compelling power as does the Master of Nazareth. The great reason for His unfailing hold upon humanity, is to be found in the fact that He gives us the message we most sorely need. It is the message of hope and inspiration, the message of assurance and encouragement, yes, it is the only message that, with any degree of authority and finality, presents to us the mighty claims of immortality. Confronted with the mysteries of life and death, the bewildered world-pilgrim cries out: "Lord, to whom shall we go; Thou hast the words of eternal life." After a quarter of a century of unfailing search, the great scientist, Sir Oliver Lodge, came at length to bow before this matchless Teacher and to acknowledge Him as his Lord and Master. In the eloquent language of another, it is this Divine Teacher who has literally "lifted the gates of empire from their hinges and turned the streams of centuries from their courses."

What place is this Teacher to have in our new and plastic world that is to reconstruct human relationships and to rediscover the true meaning of a universal brotherhood?

* * *

JESUS CHRIST THE REFORMER

A DISTINGUISHED Scotchman once said, "The social art of living is learned, not in the school of polemic, but in that of the crucified." That Jesus was essentially a reformer is unquestioned; true, He is generally represented as the gentlest and tenderest of men, but apart from all this, the heroic in His nature flashes forth on such occasions as when he cleansed the Temple precincts, or spoke of a petty monarch as a "fox" whose authority He rejected. So heroic is Christ in Lord Tennyson's estimate of Him that he begins his great poem, "In Memoriam," with the line:

"Strong Son of God, immortal love."

Jesus came to break down unwholesome traditions and customs, and to usher in a new day of right dealing between man and man. The people of His time rejected Him, despised Him, crucified Him. Why? Because He directed His invective against entrenched systems that witnessed to insincerity, injustice and inequity.

That Jesus is the world's foremost reformer, the most aggressive enemy of social and industrial ills, as well as of those religious inconsistencies that repeatedly disclose themselves, is incontrovertible. The world's lesser reformers have drawn their inspiration from Him. A champion of all that was true and pure, the espouser of any cause where weakness was exploited, an unflinching advocate of the down-trodden and helpless, He was at all times and under all conditions the unexampled leader in all that makes for human betterment. He was a world's man in the largest sense, intensely human and yet altogether divine. If He came to bring to men a truer system of religious devotion, if His teaching gave to the world its best expression of the life-expectant, then it is

equally true that he dealt with those things that have to do with time, and conditions that affect the life-existent.

We have not thought of Jesus as having to do with civic and social and industrial conditions, and yet He is incomparably the greatest exponent of equity and justice. His definition of the two obligations of life, as given in the summary of law, sets forth His policy: First, the right relation between man and his God, second, the right relation between man and his fellows.

His church today must reproduce His method and must take its avowed and unchallenged place as an institution that has to do with all those wholesome reforms that are related to world-betterment. We believe the church will move with greater haste in the direction of world-leadership when it has learned that future bliss is built upon the sure foundations of present happiness. In other words, it will come to its highest attainment when it has accomplished here a society, whose controlling maxim is expressed in the law of human brotherhood. When we give Christ His rightful and proper place as the world's greatest reformer we will bring Him within the range of all that concerns human interests, and hasten the day when the kingdoms of this world shall come under His divine sway. The pierced hand of this Divine Reformer must again be felt touching the world's every interest, and His large conception of a real, universal brotherhood must, with revivifying power, cover the earth, even as the waters cover the sea.

JESUS CHRIST THE FRIEND

THE story of the world's great friendships would be the story of its great inspirations. The flame of genius burns more brightly where it is fed and sustained by love and encouragement. No one of us can live his life efficiently, alone. We crave companionship and we reach our greatest heights of influence and power when supported by those we call our friends.

Jesus Christ was not unlike other men in his yearning for the love and sympathy of friendship. He sought out men, most of them homely, simple peasants, and from them He chose His intimates and those who were to found His kingdom on earth. One of the youngest of these men came to be known as "John the Beloved," and his writings are full of the spirit of the great fellowship he had with the Master. In one of the lonely moments of Christ's life He turned to these companions and, with an evident craving for their closer fellowship, He said: "Will ye also go away?" It would not be wide of the mark to say, that it was upon the basis of a strong and enduring friendship that He laid the foundations of His system. The Christian religion is essentially a society of friends. Unfortunately it has not always been characterized by the spirit of fraternity, and it is this aspect of it that does violence to the plans of its divine Founder. In the formation of this society, Jesus violated traditions and destroyed precedents. He found His friends not among the socially exclusive or among the schoolmen. He walked up and down the common paths of life drawing to His unrecognized standard and comparatively revolutionary teachings, a party of stalwart, active business-men. It was because of these very intimacies with

men of humble life and habit that they called Him in derision, "the friend of publicans and sinners." Glorious title for the world's Master-friend!

It is evident that Jesus Christ did not select these men that He might draw from them the plan of His system, but He did select and choose them, that He might satisfy the cravings of a heart that had human instincts and longings; and, again, we believe He chose them and gave them their great commission, that He might forever give to His kingdom on earth the character of a universal friendship. Here in this Master we find, even in His search for companions, that which compels our love and calls forth our deepest devotion. Christ's life was as full of vicissitudes, as invested with all that the caprice and fickleness of man could lend to it, as any we know. He lived a life full of manifold and swift changes. He rose step by step to the great accomplishment to which He was committed. Yet, through it all, there was the same devotion and affection for those who were with Him from the beginning. Where is there a finer, truer love and devotion that that which He disclosed to his faithless disciple, Peter, on the night that he denied Him? Even Judas, traitorous betrayer that he was, received no other word of condemnation than this: "Betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" It was true of Him that, "having loved His own, He loved them unto the end."

We like to think of this great society of friends, with Jesus at its center, as continuing unbroken through all the ages. What fellowships and intimacies have been born out of it! What courage and heroism it has inspired! How it has, century by century, been breaking down walls of division and separation, until at length we are coming to believe that only thin, invisible lines divide us. What a passionate yearning there is today all

around the world for the increase of this Christian fellowship, and how majestic is the person of Jesus of Nazareth, as He stands forth, the incomparable friend of humanity. It makes us yearn the more for the fulfilment of that high vision of Robert Burns when,

"Man to man the world o'er,
Shall brothers be, for a' that."

* * *

JESUS CHRIST THE LIBERATOR

"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

VICTOR HUGO, France's incomparable author, once wrote:

"The first tree of liberty was planted eighteen centuries ago by God Himself on Golgotha. The first tree of liberty was that cross on which Jesus Christ was offered, a sacrifice for the liberty, equality and fraternity of the human race."

That Jesus Christ should be accorded a place among the world's emancipators may, on first consideration, seem strange, but we believe that in no aspect of His life, other than that of the world's Saviour, does He come so close to the heart of humanity as in the role of the world's liberator. One of the great purposes of His life, as He repeatedly asserted, was the liberation of men from the thralldoms that had restrained and shackled them through the ages. He touched with His divine hand the chain that bound man to a past full of crude and arbitrary conceptions of God and of life's obligations. We believe that in three conspicuous ways Christ witnesses to the high place of leadership as the liberator of men.

First, He is the liberator of men from the thralldom of human philosophies. Second, He is the liberator of men from the slavery of fear. Third, He is the liberator of men from the slavery of sin. That the world at the coming of Christ was rich in philosophy and that it had many noble and inspiring religious systems, no one would venture for an instant to deny. Notwithstanding this, the world had largely lost the inspiration of a true and deep religious faith. It had substituted the teachings of men for the commandments of God. It was vainly seeking to satisfy the human heart with traditions and customs. A shackled mind, a restrained aspiration, and a forsaken hope—these were the root causes of the world's bitterness. The world had lost its great vision. Jesus came declaring this eternal word, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." He brought the only thing that could make men free, truth—the great, emancipating power in human life. What it has done for the betterment of human institutions, what it has done for the amelioration of the sufferings of men, what it has done for the elevation of womanhood and the conservation of childhood, yes, what it has done for the world's genius in its every form and expression, let the certain voice of history declare.

Again, Christ is the liberator of men from the slavery of fear. The influence of fear-thought upon life is so evident as to need no demonstration. Free men from the burdening anxiety of a doubtful present and an unknown future, give to every day an objective, and to time a destiny possible of attainment, and you have plucked the thorn from life's pathway, and for foreboding fear substituted triumphant hope. A life full of fear is a life full of weakness. For what Carlyle called an "absentee God," Jesus gave us the conception of an ever-present

Father. He took away the fear of death, and of "that bourne from whence no traveler returns." He gave us new conceptions and larger visions. "He brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel."

Finally, Jesus freed man from the slavery of sin. "He knew what was in man." He penetrated beneath his rough and rude exterior and to man's vision disclosed the latent capacities within. He lifted a fallen creature from her degradation. He plucked her from her shame and on her brow He placed the diadem of hope. The emancipating power of Jesus is the mightiest miracle of the New Testament, and it is a miracle that is as operative today, as when He walked here on earth. We are the witnesses daily of "twice born men." Jesus, the Liberator, is exercising His emancipating power more widely and effectively today than ever before, and the dark shadows of slavery are fleeing before His face and giving promise of that new morning when the world shall be free.

* * *

JESUS CHRIST THE SAVIOUR

"THERE is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." These words express the conviction of a little group of men and women at the day-dawn of the Christian era. They indicate a change of attitude that, in the face of the then existing conditions, was as remarkable as it was heroic. To profess faith in the crucified Nazarene meant to incur the sternest disciplines, and in many cases to forfeit one's life. It was this conviction, however, that literally made the Christian church so mighty and irresistible that within three centuries it had substituted

its standards for those of the Roman legions, and had established itself in the great centers of learning and power.

Jesus of Nazareth has many names and distinctions, but He takes His supremest place in human thought as the world's Saviour and Redeemer. When we measure His life by human standards there are some aspects of it that we can comprehend and understand, but when we are confronted with His Saviourhood He rises to such sublime heights and gives evidence of such supreme power and authority, that, with Thomas of old, we can only cry out: "My Lord and my God."

In the loneliness of his exile, Napoleon repeatedly turned to the consideration of Jesus Christ's life and ministry, and in his latest hours he recognized, not only the transcendent beauty of His life and teachings, but he betrayed a deep reverence for His sovereign place as the world's Saviour. When the Frenchman, Renan, attempted to write the life of Jesus, which is one of the most beautiful expressions of that life the world contains, unbeliever though he was, he was appalled by the colossal assertion of Jesus as the world's Redeemer. After years of deep sorrow, in which the mystery of death was uppermost in his mind, Tennyson thus addresses Christ:

> "Thou seemest human and divine,
> The highest, holiest manhood Thou,
> Our wills are ours, we know not why,
> Our wills are ours to make them Thine."

There can be no question about it that the outstanding appeal that Jesus makes to the human consciousness is that of man's Saviour and Redeemer. He declared Himself to be the giver of "the more abundant life." He says, with strange authority: "Whosoever believeth on

me hath everlasting life." And again, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Even on the cross, with hands and body pierced, He asserts His sovereignty to the dying thief: "Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

Confronted with these mighty assertions, human speculation and doubt are arrested and the hand of faith is outstretched for that which the human heart craves and which Jesus Christ alone satisfies. If the poet's word is true,

> "'Tis life whereof our souls are scant,
> More life and fuller that we want,"

then here by the side of the world's Saviour we discover those wells of power and inspiration that spring up unto everlasting life. It is our deep conviction that His saving power is not a consummation effective only when life is spent. Say what we may, there is something which the consciousness of His Saviourhood lends to life here and now that is utterly beyond our powers to analyze or express. We are a world of men and women with the first glow of the eternal life upon us; upon whose faces there can be no shadow of departing day. What this old world is sighing for today, what it has ever sighed for, is the conscious presence of its Saviour, for the Saviourhood of Jesus has to do with life's renewals. With even a partial conception of this transmitted power of Jesus, the tasks and burdens of life are lightened and its most awful problems solved.

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